

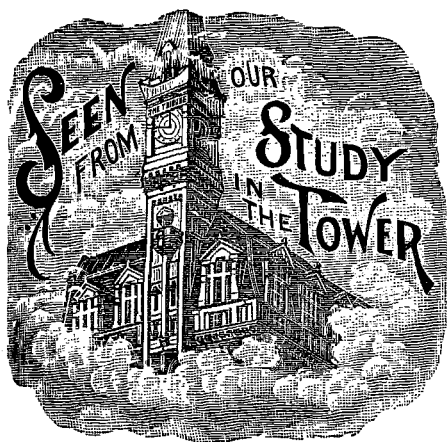
CHRISTIAN NATION

"**RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION.**"

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The Secretary of War and the Sabbath.

Public men must be tested by their attitude to the divine law. The confidence of the Christian people can only be accorded to those who observe it. The Secretary of War traveled to Buffalo on Sabbath, June 9, arriving in the evening, and was met by the Director-General of the Pan-American Exposition. The dispatch of June 9 says: "Secretary Root saw the grand illumination to-night. He will make a thorough examination of the interior of the Exposition to-morrow."

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The Need of Christian Colleges.

The necessity for the Christian college is shown by the following statement by President Holden, of Wooster:

"The seminaries contain 1,915 theological students who are college graduates. Of these 1,915 theological students 1,805 come from Christian colleges and universities, and the remaining 110 from non-Christian colleges. I find by a careful collation of the last report of the United States Commissioner of Education, the following facts: There are about 54,000 youth in college classes in this country, about 29,000 of them in Christian, and about 25,000 of them in non-Christian colleges. So there is at present one college graduate theological student for every 16 students in Christian colleges, and one college graduate theological student for every 230 students in non-Christian colleges. If there were only non-Christian colleges here, and the same results obtained, college graduate theological students to-day would number not 1,915, but 238."

Secret Societies and the Testimony of the United Presbyterian Church.

Some looked for a victory of the orders in the Assembly, but they were disappointed in their contention. The Christian Instructor says:

"The action of the Assembly on the fifteenth article of the Testimony, on secret societies, was not satisfactory to all the members, and will not be to all the Church, but it was probably the best that could be taken considering all the circumstances. The action was discriminating and definite in its character. It declared that the fifteenth article expresses the general sentiment of the Church in relation to secret societies, but specified that it does not apply to all of these. It defines those to which it does have application, namely, those that impose immoral oaths on their members, and have a religious ritual that excludes the Lord Jesus Christ and his atonement, and declares that members identified with these shall not be admitted to fellowship in the Church. This is stronger than any interpretation of the fifteenth article that has been heretofore given."

* * *

The Scotch-Irish Congress.

The meeting at Chambersburgh, Pa., was interesting. The congress will meet next year in Charlotte, N. C. An account of the Sabbath services is found in the Valley Spirit of June 5, as follows:

"Not for many years has there assembled at Rocky Spring Church an audience so large as that which filled it Sabbath. The announcement that religious services under the auspices of the Scotch-Irish Society of America would be held there on last Sabbath brought the people in such numbers that the church could not contain them. It recalled the statements of men who worshiped there 75 years since, that on communion Sabbaths in the spring and fall it was impossible for all the people to get into the church and at the four open doors on Sabbath the people stood to take part in the exercises. In most of the years of the past century of this congregation carriages were not in use by the country people, and they made their way to these services either on foot or horseback, and there were no long line of carriages standing around the churchyard on Sabbath. The large congregation was made up of members from the greater part of Letterkenny township, from Culbert-

son's Row, Hamilton township, St. Thomas, and at one time from Chambersburgh. All these and many more sections were represented Sabbath at the services.

"The services were opened with prayer by Rev. J. S. McIntosh, D.D., and followed by the reading and expounding of the twenty-third Psalm by Dr. J. Agnew Crawford, as was the old custom. Rev. Dr. McLanahan, formerly of Greencastle, but now of Orange, N. J., read the forty-fourth Psalm. Dr. Macloskie, of Princeton Seminary, made a very touching address in which he referred to the old churches in Ireland that were similar to the one in which we are worshipping. His thoughts carried him back to his native land, and tears filled his eyes and many of the congregation while he spoke in tenderness and love of our duties.

"Dr. McIntosh preached the sermon from the text, 'It is good that a man bear the yoke in his youth.' The singing was led from the preacher's desk by W. G. Reed. Rev. H. G. Clare, the pastor, pronounced the benediction and the large assemblage slowly dispersed. After the close of the exercises the old churchyard and other points of interest were visited, and by an hour later the large number of people had gone to their homes."

Should not the Scripturalness and simplicity of this worship lead to the revival of it, in place of the prevalent forms of the day?

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An Additional Hundred Thousand Readers.

Covenanters have made it manifest that they mean to build up the circulation of the CHRISTIAN NATION to the limit of their ability. They are obviously of the opinion that the CHRISTIAN NATION fairly and forcefully advocates the Christian principles of civil government for the maintenance of which Covenanters are in covenant with God. They are of one mind that the time has come for uttering their testimony to men and women of every faith. To reach the largest number of Christian people at the smallest cost, is to send the paper to the Y. M. C. A. reading rooms. We made an offer one year ago to furnish the paper for this purpose at fifty cents per copy. A large number of orders were received, and after one year's trial, the Secretaries of the Associations have in almost every case expressed an earnest desire that the paper shall be continued. Here is a letter from

Moderator's Sermon.

"Wilt Thou Not Revive Us Again?"-- Psalm 85:6.*

By Dr. F. M. Foster, Retiring Moderator.

In this Psalm, former mercies are used as arguments for renewal of divine favor. "Thou hast been favorable." "Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob." "Thou hast forgiven." "Thou hast taken away all thy wrath." "Thou hast turned from the fierceness of thine anger." Having experienced in the past such evidences of divine love, God is entreated to show again His favor. "Turn us, O God! Cause thine anger to cease! Wilt thou be angry with us forever? Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? Wilt thou not revive us again?"

There had been long delay. There had been reason for long delay. The urgent entreaty indicates changed attitude; a changed heart; a changed purpose. There is repentance; a longing for restoration to divine favor; to the joys of communion and fellowship; to the protection of His Presence. There is the consciousness that, to experience these things, there must be revival of religion. Earnestly longing for these blessed experiences, Israel prays, "Wilt thou not revive us again?"

The church of God needs, in every generation, to pray this prayer. It is especially appropriate now, for there is decline in spirituality, in piety, in doctrine; with corresponding inflow of error, worldliness, and sin. The Church sees God, but not with fullness of light. Are we anxious for a fuller view; for more intimate fellowship; for more of His Spirit; for a wider door; for the test of suffering? Is this really our prayer, "Wilt thou not revive us again?"

A spiritually declining church will not believe that she has fallen. Though her spiritual tone, her curriculum of doctrine, her modes of worship, her walk and conversation, are not what they once were, she will stoutly maintain her purity. Rome claims to be the apostolic church without change. She refuses to believe that she has fallen. Churches with worldliness sitting in the chief seats, will not believe that they have fallen. Churches which cast out the Songs of Zion and introduce instrumentation in the worship of God will not believe that they have fallen. And we of the Covenant Church would scarcely admit that we have dropped back from the attainments of the Reformation. God's warning to the church of Ephesus, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen," indicates that the consciousness of it is soon lost. Truth insensibly disappears; and error, through a process of infiltration, takes its place.

Let it not be supposed that, because people will not admit that error has crept into the curriculum of doctrine, that the worship of God has been corrupted, that what will please the world is a determining factor, therefore, the people have ceased to be religious. Here is the mistake and the danger. Being religious, and being religious according to the Scriptures, are vastly different. The one is the expression of innate religious tendency; the other, seeking God and the forgiveness of sins through Christ's blood, and the observing of all things whatsoever He has commanded. Romanists are religious. So are the Mormons. So are the Unitarians. Marks of spiritual decline are to be sought, not so much in decline of religious feeling, as in the rejection of what God has revealed, and the introduction of what He has forbidden.

Preliminary to setting forth another view, let it be observed:

1. GOD LOVES HIS CHURCH.

The Scriptural evidence of this fact is complete. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more

than all the dwellings of Jacob." "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever, here will I dwell; for I have desired it." God has purchased the church with his own blood. Even this does not measure the depth of his affection. He has bought his people that He may, by renewing, bestowing gifts and graces, show, through all eternity, what He will do for them He loves; as a man, buying a plot, with the house in ruins, tears away the old building that He may build a palace. The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife, and He loves her.

First, God has given to the church seasons of gracious revival. Israel frequently forsook God; but each time God brought back his people. They destroyed their idols, razed their idol-temples, and set up the worship of the true God, and often under circumstances of great national rejoicing. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries God revived his church, and the blessed effects are seen to this day. These were times when the Covenants were renewed, and the pure worship observed.

2. God earnestly waits for OPPORTUNITY TO REVIVE HIS CHURCH. It is most comforting to know that in times of spiritual declension God does not finally cast off his people! GOD WAITS! And as He waits He pleads, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?" (Hos. 2:14).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Such passages teach that God does not forsake His people until after they have forsaken Him. "If ye seek him he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him he will forsake you." (1 Chron. 15:1, 4.)

The fatal step, and which can be retraced only with torn flesh, with bleeding feet, with streaming tears, with breaking heart, is taken by us, not by God. God waits! Through all the declension, God waits! (a) He multiplies difficulties and hardships to bring the Church to a sense of her condition. The path is made rough—fiery serpents, deadly plagues, captivity in Babylon; the liquor traffic; Sabbath desecration; indifference to God; abounding immorality; a form of godliness, but without its power. In these days, little notice is taken of these things as the hand of God against a worldly church. God withstands the downward progress of His people as He withstood Baalim in the way. (b) God causes the Church to remember His former loving kindnesses and blessed communion. God caused the exiles in Babylon to remember Zion, the days of blessed and joyous worship. These memories stirred the heart; they wept, and as they wept, they sang that plaintive melody, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." As the Church remembers former times, she sings again, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" (Ps. 77:7, 9). When a church begins to thus pray and to thus sing, we can be assured of two things: 1. She is realizing that her trials are from God who is stopping the way. (2) She is recalling the compassion, the former loving kindnesses of God and the blessed communion of former days. The deflected needle is coming under the power of the spiritual pole. Its uneasiness is a prophecy of what is about to take place.

What conclusion, other than this, can be reached—the present afflicted condition of Zion, her low measure of grace, her lack of spiritual power, are not through fault or failure in God. God is like a great reservoir, whose waters press through the mains, seeking to supply the city with abundance of refreshing water. The reservoir is not at fault because aqueduct and pipes are partially filled with foreign matter and the flow is hindered. God is not at fault because the channels of grace are partially clogged through the Church's worldliness and sin. He stands ready waiting to bestow the wealth of his grace and love, and mercy and truth and forgiveness. If a son has dishonored his father he cannot give him gifts, but he longs for that son to repent and seek forgiveness, that he may give him all that he hath. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?"

How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I maketh thee as Adam? How shall I set thee as Zeboum? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim." "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day."

Turn for another view.

II.—WILL GOD REVIVE US?

"Yes" and "No." Yes, if we will put away strange gods. No, if we refuse to turn unto the Lord. There is little use in praying for, or hoping for, special blessings, more than we have now received, if we continue as heretofore. To gain the coveted blessing we must

1. BE RID OF EVERYTHING OFFENSIVE TO GOD IN OUR PRIVATE LIVES. If there is anything in our private lives which hinders the inflow of the Holy Spirit we should not rest until we have cast it out. One of the most eminent ministers, in a public meeting, used language something like this: "My continual prayer is that God would remove from me everything that hinders Him from using me in His service, and to His glory." He said God is willing, anxious and the need is great, and he was distressed at the poverty of his labors, and prayed to have the hinderances removed. This should be the prayer of every minister of Jesus Christ, and of every member of the church of God. Each can look into his own heart and see what should be removed. We should sanctify ourselves if we hope to have God draw near unto us, and if we hope to draw near to the Lord God of Israel. If we are to look upon the burning bush we must put off our shoes, for the place is holy. Judging ourselves sincerely, are these times of "falling away," of coldness, of deadness, the result of a lower standard of piety in the ministry, in the membership, in the lives of the Covenant people?

2. THE WORSHIP OF GOD MUST BE GIVEN ITS DIVINELY APPOINTED PLACE, AND WITH DIVINELY APPOINTED ORDINANCES.

The place which the worship of God held in the First Dispensation, is of great significance. The fire on the altar was continuous. Unnumbered thousands of sheep and oxen were offered. The temple service was rich and glorious. The people in Israel's pure days were religious. They had time to be religious. Much of their time was taken in the exercises of divine worship. There were three great feasts held at Jerusalem, and at which all the male Israelites were expected to go to that city. Including travel, these feasts would require of the worshipper at average distance from Jerusalem, from forty to sixty days each year. In addition there was the weekly Sabbath, the New Moons and other set times for worship. It was worship, worship, worship. And in all this worship the great sacrifice for sin was the center. The minds of the people were continually directed to God.

To put in contrast present-day worship, either in matter, in manner, in time given, is but to expose one of the greatest failings, shall I not say sins, of the church of God? The public and divine worship, conducted by the ordained minister of Jesus Christ, is being cut into by meetings of every description; often wholly secular, and if not secular, to the curtailment and abridgement of the service of the sanctuary.

There is something about the public service of God's worship in the sanctuary which is not seen or felt in any other meeting whatsoever. We go up to the house of God to worship. But attention these days is being diverted from this seriously important duty. It appears that the enemy's master stroke is to fill the Sabbath so full of meetings and the week so full of toil that people will not have time or strength for the services of the sanctuary. Thus we rob God of the worship due unto his high and holy name! Angels praise God continually, and the redeemed cease not their alleluias; but on earth, worship holds a secondary place. Any trifling cause or some supposed service is sufficient to leave the pew vacant.

When the character of the worship rendered in many churches is considered, the case is still more alarming. Instead of worship, there is entertainment, great singers, great organists, highly trained choirs whose efforts are not to be disturbed by the congregation. To satisfy the unregenerate all kinds of operatic performances are introduced. A musical programme, wholly secular, is rendered. The prima donna divides the time with the minister. Secular music greets the ear before the service has opened, and follows after it has closed. God's songs are, providentially, withdrawn from such associations. The whole ordinance of worship is practically lost amid the man-made devices, the operatic music, thunders of the organ, the engines in the cellar, the laborers shoveling in coal to keep up steam! Are we so befogged as to call this worship? What is spiritual adultery if it is not participating in services not appointed in God's Word, and which,

therefore, become immoral? We are losing our talent for indignation at these sins against God!

If we would be revived there must be consistent testimony against the wrongs to God and to His church, in the corruption of this holy ordinance. Against them we must seriously protest, and our conduct must not nullify our protest.

The call should go forth as when Elijah stood upon Mount Carmel, for a rebuilding of the altar of God, for a revival of His worship as He has appointed in His word, i. e., with the Songs of Zion, sung from the heart, and without instrumentation; that nothing should be allowed to interfere with this highest and most sacred of all duties, the worship of God! "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord."

3. THE CHURCH'S CONFESSION MUST BE DOCTRINALLY SOUND AND AS BROAD AS THE TRUTH.

"Take heed to the doctrine." "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Why such emphasis on doctrine? Because "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

Error presses on all sides, as the water presses on all sides of the ship. If seams start, if ants or worms eat out the timbers, the water will come in; and, if not resisted, will bring disaster. If the church is sound in her curriculum of doctrine, she can resist error. Her power to resist is in proportion to her purity, her piety, her devotion. Her decline will be marked by the "starting" of some doctrine; by the trickling in, at the first, then the more rapid inflow of error. Presently the scope of the confession is reduced. Then the Scriptures are divided into "essential" and "non-essential" parts; and all doctrines and commandments and ordinances distasteful to the unregenerate and to the backslider are assigned to the "non-essential" list. In fine the inspiration of the Scriptures is attacked. This point reached, the church ceases to have a serious controversy with worldliness and sin. Her measure of sanctification is scarcely distinguished from worldly standards.

The teaching of the seven churches was the object of special examination by Him who walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Those which taught error were rebuked. Could they expect a revival while they continued to teach error? Instead, they had their blessings, power, influence, more and more curtailed. God does not grant special blessings to those who do wrong!

Heterodoxy can be traced to one of three sources: (a) To ignorance of the Word. (b) To rejection of the truth. (c) To misinterpretation of the truth. The last—the misinterpretation of the truth—is a prolific source of error, and which leads to corrupt manners and life. But misinterpretation of truth does not release from responsibility. 1. It is false witness against God. 2. It misinforms the inquirer. 3. It aids the kingdom of darkness. 4. It hinders the kingdom of God. 5. It corrupts the soul. 6. It atrophies the whole spiritual nature. 7. It divides the visible church. Such being the serious consequences of misinterpretation of the Word of God, is it reasonable to suppose that the church which thus wrongs God and man shall receive his special benediction, and shall be the special medium of his power? We should not misunderstand. Adding to church membership, making converts, is not incontestable evidence that the work is God's. Rome makes converts. So do the Mormons. When a church falls, she does not cease to make converts, or to be religious. To spread your belief is human.

In the present day there must be alarming misinterpretation of the Word of God somewhere. The one hundred and forty-three denominations testify to this fact. And as if this were not sufficient, there is a move upon the bulwarks of sister evangelical denominations, not from without, but from within! What mean these hurrying feet! These drumbeats sounding the demand for revision of the Confession of Faith? They are evidence that error has gained such standing as to insist that truth shall be publicly condemned and crucified! Let it be earnestly remembered that every point of truth surrendered can be reclaimed only through suffering; frequently through unutterable sorrows. What we give away others must buy back with their blood!

A church which hopes to be revived must bear consistent testimony against error, so consistent that she can reasonably look for the divine blessing. She must have positive convictions and convictions that are in harmony with the Word of God. It is germane therefore to ask, Has error crept in? Is error creeping into our curriculum of belief? Are we losing our doctrinal tone? Are we conniving at violations of the Covenant? Are we forsaking the great principles of the second reformation? Are we keeping our pulpits pure? Are we preaching a full gospel, and forgiveness through Christ's blood? Can we heartily, consistently, pray to God to revive us? Do we deserve to be revived?

The way many parts of the visible church is falling into heterodoxy is alarming. A public profes-

sion in nearly all churches means, from a doctrinal standard, next to nothing. The Baptist insures the candidate to believe in immersion; the Lutheran, in transubstantiation. The Presbyterian and Methodist have no particular war cry; but they ask the candidate, Do you believe in Christ? What he believes is not a matter of serious investigation. There is a grand race for members, a hurdle-race which is intended to clear all obstructions without touching the top rail. Doctrine is falling into innocuous desuetude. The visible church is going down the rapids toward the sea of "no creed," whose waters cast up mire and dirt. It requires no special powers as a seer to prophecy that within twenty years the principal events of the so-called "church-year" will be observed by nearly all Protestant churches. And we are all keeping step in our Sabbath school lessons which are prepared with this end in view. "Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, ed, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."

4. THE CHURCH MUST MAINTAIN THE BIBLE STANDARD OF MORALITY.

Speaking of the church in general, this is not done. Ministers of evangelical churches will approve of card-playing, dancing, theatre-going, amusements and outings on the Sabbath. Ministers and members will break the Sabbath and claim that they are justified in so doing. A minister was preaching the Convention Sermon in a district Christian Endeavor Convention, and on the Lord's day. He urged a higher type of piety, fuller consecration, better observance of the Sabbath. Once his sermon was finished he ran in all haste to catch the train for New York—one hundred and fifty miles away! A thousand times better had he preached Sabbath observance by remaining in New York at the first! It is believed that 90 per cent of the engineers, the firemen, the trainmen, the conductors, the switchmen, the round-house men, the station men, the motormen and all engaged in the operating department of all companies which transport passengers, and their number reaches into hundreds of thousands, are to-day embittered at the church, and never darken her doors, because her members insist that they shall labor on the Sabbath given to man for rest! The cry of the poor and of the oppressed is going up to God! and the church in not a few instances is the oppressor!

We will move out of bounds, and have 1,000 men work on the Sabbath all day, to be ready to haul us back and forth to the house of God. And if one of the thousand happens to be a church member we cast him out! In government we will not vote for a man to take office because he will be required to do what we will not do ourselves. But in rail-roading on the Sabbath we not only ask him to do what we will not do ourselves, but at the very moment he does it we cast him out of the church. Is it worth while to talk about a revival? Under such conditions the high standard of piety and consecration necessary to maintain the high standard of Covenanter truth cannot long live, much less be revived.

That it is difficult to maintain a Bible standard of morality in the midst of adverse influences, scattered populations and rapid transit facilities, is admitted. It is not easy to go against public opinion and practices which public opinion sanctions. But difficulties are for the testing of our faith, and of our fidelity under temptation. Every community needs the high standard of God's law. No amount of service, no work however good, can justify the violations of the law of God. Saul thought to improve on God's command, and he lost his kingdom, and he lost his life. People are running here and there these days, zealous in multiplying works, but the law of God suffers sadly at their hands. Working on the Sabbath is not longer regarded as a censurable offence. Mail is taken from the post office on the Sabbath by members, elders and ministers. Papers issued on the Sabbath go into countless thousands of Christian homes, with scarcely a voice crying in the wilderness against this wrong to God!

The Church is in danger of accentuating a wrong moral philosophy, which is, the high standard of the divine law is not required of this generation—a disastrous philosophy! And that the Church need not concern herself about the conduct of her members.

A revival means Bible morality. Are we ready for it? Do we wish the law of God written on our foreheads, on the palms of our hands, on the doors of our houses, on the posts of our gates?

5. THERE MUST BE A RETURN TO OLD-FASHIONED FAMILY RELIGION.

Seventy-five years ago nearly every person went to church, barring irreligious populations in cities. The public schools were permeated with religious influences and sound religious teaching. The schoolmaster was thorough-going in his belief in the Word of God. The pupils committed Scripture verses and read verse about in the morning exercises. Monday morning not infrequently witnessed the reciting of questions in the catechism. These things were the

natural expression of religion in the family. The home was beautiful in the simplicity of the religious life, in the high reverence for God. There was a Sabbath school in each house. The father was the superintendent, and the mother the head teacher. The children learned from the parents whom, and whom only, the child will implicitly believe, to fear God and to keep his commandments.

But all this has now suffered great change. The public schools are nearly Godless. The week is so full of business and the Sabbath is so full of meetings that parents have not time or inclination to train their children and they are turned over to the Sabbath school. The catechism is not recited regularly in the home, and the Psalms are not generally committed. As a result the children grow up with little knowledge of the Bible and less fear of God. In multitudes of cases they are not taught to go, with any degree of regularity, to church.

Dr. Cuyler has said: "Another bad symptom is the growing neglect of wholesome, faithful religious instruction in families, for this no Sabbath school teaching can be a substitute. God made mothers before he made Sabbath schools. The church in the house is the best feeder of the church in the sanctuary." Spurgeon says: "Sabbath schools were never intended to take the place of a mother's tears and a father's prayers." It is estimated that 90 per cent of the young men in cities are out of the church. It is a fair question, Are present methods a success?

What is needed is a revival of family religion. Make Sabbath schools the best possible, but revive family religion. Parents should teach their children and discontinue their attendance and the attendance of their children on the Sabbath school, if it be necessary to reach this work charged by God upon parents. Parents need this work as much as the children. God made no mistake when He said: "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, and keep his commandments." (Ps. 78:5, 7.) No church need expect a revival which does not include a revival of religion in the home, such a revival as will cause parents to feel their responsibility for their children's salvation. Otherwise there is little reason to expect them to remain in an orthodox communion, if indeed they do not lose connection altogether with the church of God. The family altar must be rebuilt, for in not a few instances it has been broken down. The family must be sacred in its religious life. "For I know him (Abraham), that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," (Gen. 18:19). Brethren, are we willing to break with some of the theories which prevail, and say to parents, Teach your children first, and then, and not till then, go to the Sabbath school? Allow nothing to come between you and your duty to your children. A revival of religion in the home will bring a revival of religion in the church of God.

6. IF THE CHURCH WOULD BE REVIVED, SHE MUST BE A COVENANT-KEEPING CHURCH.

God will not revive a covenant-breaking church, except she repent. In his infinite mercy he will use her in bringing many sons into glory; but she has been fatally inoculated with error. Her course will be one of easy, sometimes of more rapid, retrogression, until she becomes the synagogue of Satan. The church of Rome was once the church of God. "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

Perhaps at no time since the Reformation was there such pressure to forsake the Covenants as at this day. Many are growing uneasy and are prophesying disaster. No human eye can foresee; no human mind can foretell, what is to befall "denominations" in the years which are to come. In one view they emulate and inspire; in another, the tendency to all partake of like characteristics and to all reach the same level, is almost irresistible. The pressure is so strong that some few think the bulwarks are giving way, and the old Church is being swept from her foundations. With such view, they assume the responsibility of setting aside the Covenants and of disregarding ordination vows. This is disastrous. If such spirit prevails to any considerable extent; or if it goes unchallenged or unrebuked, there is little hope of a revival.

Such views are narrow and give evidence of unbelief. God is on the side of truth. He has pledged the resources of heaven that the truth shall prevail. "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again!"

A Covenant-keeping church is a praying church. She will beseech and entreat God! Her prayer is the prayer of Daniel, when imploring the forgiveness of God for his people, and their restoration to favor. She is a worshipping church. She is a church of mighty faith. She dwells near the throne

of God. She believes in the testimony of Jesus, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." A Covenant-keeping church may be severely tried as at this day; she may be depleted in membership, but if she is faithful she will rise as certainly as to-morrow's sun!

James Guthrie, standing on the scaffold on which he was to die for the testimony of Jesus, lifted the napkin from his eyes and cried: "The Covenants, the Covenants, shall yet be Scotland's reviving!" Faithful to their trust unto death the blessed revival came! God will revive a covenant-keeping church!

III.—IF GOD WILL REVIVE US!

1. WHAT A BLESSING IT WILL BE TO US AS INDIVIDUALS.

Is there one here who does not bewail the spiritual poverty of his own heart? Or are we as the Laodiceans who knew not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked? God counsels us to buy of him gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich; and white raiment that we may be clothed; and that the shame of our nakedness do not appear; and to anoint our eyes with eye-salve that we may see. If the spiritual life is feeble, our efforts in seeking God for ourselves, our efforts in behalf of others are correspondingly weak. There is little taste for the service of God whether in the pulpit or in the pew. The Sabbath is a long day, and in the morning we answer, "Would God it were evening!" How different the experience when the soul is filled with the stirring energy of the Divine Presence! Is there any greater blessing possible to a man in whom the spiritual fire has burned down, than to have the fire of God drop from heaven upon the altar of his own soul? Before, he was a Gideon threshing wheat behind a winepress for fear of the Midianites. Now he is a soldier who leads three hundred against the martialled hosts, shouting "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The marvellous change is brought about by the Spirit of the Lord coming upon him. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephtha and made him a mighty man of valor; upon Samson and he smote the thousands of the Philistines; upon Elijah, and he came down from Mount Gilead, and uttered startling judgments against Ahab; called down fire from heaven and slew four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Luther, upon Knox, and they roused Europe and Britain against the abominations of Rome. If we could only be revived, aroused, baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire! what a blessing it would be to us as individuals! One thoroughly revived soul in a congregation will put to shame our cold, dead-like experiences. Touching others he would cause the fire to spread. A thoroughly awakened minister will be either cast out of his pulpit, or the unsanctified will leave him; or they will cry out, "what must I do to be saved?" Would God that we could be thus revived! Your speaker needs it most of all. Possibly all need it in some measure. O that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon us; that the blessed Master would breathe upon us, to quicken into life-power what knowledge of truth we possess; to enlarge our views of God; to cause our spiritual graces to bloom and blossom in the adorning of the Holy Ghost! to give a mighty faith in the blood of the cross, in the cleansing, delivering, sustaining power of the Son of God; to awaken zeal for the glory of God in the spread of the gospel and in the salvation of souls! If God will revive us! He has revived others. Why will he not revive us? It is worth seeking with our whole heart's desire. It will give such blessed views of God, of his mercy, of his love, of his forgiveness, of his grace! "I beseech thee, show me thy glory!"

2. WHAT A BLESSING TO THE CHURCH IF GOD WILL REVIVE HER AND FILL HER WITH THE GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE!

When the Church has small measure of the Spirit she is like Israel when under tribute to the Philistines. She has all she can do to exist. It is a struggle for life. In these sad conditions her work drags. People leave her in squads; and the world has but little, if any, respect. Better, many times better, be the object of bitter hatred and persecution! Contrast the condition of Israel in times when that people fell into idolatry with its abominations and just judgments of Almighty God! with those blessed times when the gracious presence filled the most holy place, when the worship of God was regularly observed, when the prophet of God proclaimed his message of peace. Then, the people dwelt safely and alone. They were nourished with corn and wine. The land bloomed as the valley of Sharon. They had dominion over their enemies who brought tribute. **THE SECRET WAS A PURE CHURCH!**

What was true three thousand years ago, is true to-day. His commandments are the same. His work is the same. His promises are the same. A church which draws near to God will be blessed. A church which draws near to God will be made a blessing. She will be filled with the light and power

of the Divine Presence. She will be warm-hearted, courageous, valient, pious, spiritual, consecrated—the very arm of Almighty God and the power of the Spirit of Christ. "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

A revived church will blaze as fire in the darkness! She will make inroads on the kingdom of Satan! She will be the dwelling-place of God on earth! It is then that "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem," (Is. 2:2). Is this not blessed? Is it not a blessing? An unsanctified worldly church suffers defeat, which unless she repent, will be turned into disastrous rout.

3. WHAT A BLESSING TO THE WORLD IF THE CHURCH SHOULD BE REVIVED AND FILLED WITH THE DIVINE PRESENCE.

God works through the organized church. "Out of Zion shall go forth a law." "The Lord hath filled Zion with judgment." "O Zion, that bringest good tidings! O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings!" A corrupt church becomes a hinderance to the conversion of the world, and to the success of every reform work. As an institution, without God, she lies across the path of the world's evangelization. Rome may illustrate. Excepting the followers of Islam, none are more difficult to reach than the papists. They are bound and fettered, and repel advances. They hug their chains and delight in their delusions. Missions in countries dominated by Rome are resisted. A church which has lost the Spirit of God holds the people in spiritual bondage, in moral darkness, making them devotees of superstition. It hinders civilization, education, morality, and every work which would tend to develop the spirit of liberty, and of salvation through the blood of Christ. Is this a blessing? Ask South America. Ask Spain. Ask Cuba before release came. Ask Europe before the Reformation. The blessedness of a church to the world is seen in the bursting forth of the principles of civil and religious liberty, the demand for the Bible for the people, the setting up of the worship of God as commanded in his Word, the cultivation of morality, popular education, the development of trade, commerce and industry. With an awakened church goes the spirit of missions, the desire to reach the heathen with the gospel, to break down superstition, and bring the swarming millions to Christ.

Will the misery and darkness of earth ever be removed with the Church in her present state? Mission work is not progressing with that sturdy, irresistible power which characterized in the first, second and third centuries. Why? Because the Church is not in fit condition to be a great converting instrumentality. The heathen are multiplying more rapidly than the Church is converting them to Christ. Idolatry is about as strongly entrenched as it was three hundred years ago. O for a revived church! How much the world needs it! What great responsibility, if the Church through heterodoxy, unbelief, worldliness, corruption of worship, introducing for ordinances the commandments of men, causes God to withdraw his gracious presence! It is of the revived church that God says, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness waters shall break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." Can we reasonably hope for success in reform work with the Church in her present condition? The greatest hinderance to the acknowledgment of God in the constitution of the United States is a heterodox church!

4. SUCH REVIVED CHURCH WILL BE AGGRESSIVE IN WAR AGAINST SIN AND FOR TRUTH.

It is well to rejoice in what has come to us; but it does not do to be forever rallying on Bunker Hill. Advance must be made. When the Church ceases to be aggressive she begins to go back. She does not need to war against slavery, but she does need to war against the liquor traffic. If she does not, that iniquity will pollute her. She must war against Sabbath desecration, or that sin will pollute her. She must war against indifference to God, or she will become indifferent to God. She must war against the sin of swearing allegiance to a godless constitution, or her members will be swearing that "We the people" are supreme. She must war against the corruption of worship, or this rising tide of evil will overwhelm her. She must war against secrecy, or

her members will become subjects of the empire of darkness.

When Ahab had saved Benhadad, whom God had appointed to utter destruction, alive, God said to Ahab, "Thy life shall go for his life." If we save alive error, sin, wrong, and which God has appointed to utter destruction, he will cause us to suffer the harm which such error, sin and wrong inflict. To withstand the secret empire, the supremacy of "We the people"; the abominations of the liquor traffic; the corruptions of worship—is warfare defensive of the purity of spiritual life. God's command is: "Stand therefore." "Hold that fast which thou hast." There is in this the philosophy of progress. "Let tempests rage; let torrents roar; let whirlwinds churn the raging sea; we turn not back!"

But "standing" is not the sum of duty. The ramparts must be scaled, and the standard of truth planted on the very citadel of the kingdom of darkness. Truth revealed, duty revealed, sin which the Holy Ghost causes the Church to know, are not to be hidden under a bushel, or regarded as personal and private in application. They are to be heralded forth and every effort made to make them clear, as if written with fire on the darkness. There is no other way to make progress. Neither church nor state ever reforms except the sin of the present state be emphasized. The church will never rise out of her present worldly connection unless her present sinful state be proclaimed, and she be called to repentance in the name of the King of Zion. The nation will never get away from that principle of the kingdom of Satan, that "We the people" are supreme, unless the sin of the nation and God's call to repentance be proclaimed. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." The reformer in either church or state, who thinks to avoid opposition and work reformation by not emphasizing the sin of present conditions, and the call to repent, is a speculative enthusiast!

In fine: in two centuries there has not been such trumpet call to the Covenanter Church as now! There has not been, for two centuries, such opportunity to show that she possesses the spirit of the heroic, martyr dead! If present conditions will not rouse us for the purity of Zion, and for the glory of our God, what will? Dr. Palmer, on the sixtieth anniversary of his entrance into the ministry, said: "The Church is to-day contending for her very life against a spirit of worldliness." Is life worth the living if we yield? Should not the coldness, the indifference, the error, the mockery of worship which is creeping in, but stir to greater devotion?

The past history of the Church is an inspiration. It is filled with heroic deeds by heroic men. As Froude says: "Men do not gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles." A testimony which has produced a J. R. W. Sloane; an A. M. Milligan; an S. O. Wylie; a Thomas Sproull; a J. R. Willson, with a line of worthies from 1688; a Church which joined battle with Erastianism with its gory scaffold; with popery with its dungeons and stakes; which espoused the cause of the despised slave; which withstands this nation in its rejection of God, and testifies against the corruptions of worship in his house—is not the church to yield to the demands of the powers of darkness to lower her standard! The famous order of Gen. D.x is an inspiration: "If any man attempts to haul down that flag, shoot him on the spot!" If any man attempts to remove, set aside or destroy the principles for which the Church has suffered, or sell them for a mess of pottage, regard him as an enemy to souls and to the advancement of the kingdom of God! These grand principles, once filled with the light and power of the Spirit, as they will be when the Church is revived and her members are baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, will be irresistible as the armies of the living God!

What appeals come to the Church? Men, staggering under the load of sin, helpless in their misery; and hopeless in their bondage, appeal to the Church to turn unto the Lord! Society, in mortal conflict with spiritual wickedness in high places, appeals to the Church to turn unto the Lord! The state, whose very life is endangered by an unscriptural political philosophy, appeals to the Church to turn unto the Lord. Unnumbered millions in heathen darkness, crushed under the bondage of their superstitions, appeal to the Church to turn unto the Lord! The interests of the generations to come, which have right to receive from this generation, not an emasculated, but a pure, gospel, appeal to the Church to turn unto the Lord! The Saviour who shed his blood that a lost world might be redeemed, appeals to the Church to come back to God!

With such appeals in our ears, conscious of the great necessity, and of our far-reaching responsibility, will we not plead with the Lord Jesus to overwhelm sin within us, and fill us with his presence? "Wilt thou not revive us again?" Methinks I hear his answer: "Yes; if you will!"