

ZION'S LIGHT COME:

AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO HOLY EFFORT.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod

IN IRELAND,

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DISCOURSE.

ISAIAH, LX. 1.

“ARISE, SHINE; FOR THY LIGHT IS COME, AND THE GLORY OF
THE LORD IS RISEN UPON THEE.”

THE prophecies of the “Evangelical Seer,” from the beginning of the Sixtieth Chapter to the close of the book, have been referred by one distinguished interpreter, the excellent Vitringa, to that period of the New Testament economy which is immediately connected with the downfall of Antichrist, the re-gathering of Israel, the conversion of the nations, and the enlargement and establishment of the Church, at the era of the blessed Millenium. With this scheme of exposition we in general agree, affording, as we believe it does, a key to the unfolding of difficulties, and disclosing the most satisfactory and delightful view of the future condition of the Church on earth, and of the character, extent, and duration of the Messiah’s kingdom.

Throughout this and the succeeding chapter, the promises of future blessing to Zion are conveyed in terms the most expressive and significant; the descriptions of her coming prosperity are graphic and striking in no ordinary degree, betokening the loftiest flight of inspired prediction. Wrapt in prophetic vision, *Isaiah* depicts, in glowing and fervid language, the blissful change approaching. He sees a new Divine light breaking upon Zion. This is contrasted with the darkness of surrounding nations. The elect sons and daughters of the Church are gathered to her from all lands. On the one hand are seen approaching the Oriental flocks and caravans, and on the other, the commercial fleets of the Western nations, conveying to their joyful destination the restored of Israel. The

boundaries of the Church are greatly enlarged, and she exults in her spiritual freedom, emancipated completely from all local and national restrictions. None are henceforth excluded from her pale, save those who exclude themselves. All external nature contributes to her splendour.—Former evils are done away. Within, peace and joy abound,—the reign of righteousness is fully established; while without, the safety and security of the Church remain undisturbed through all future generations. Her splendour is a moral and spiritual glory, terminating in God himself as its centre and crown, and reaching forward to eternity. “The Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” There is a “set time” of favour for Zion, and it shall certainly and speedily come, at the predicted period of enlargement and blessing.

To the attentive student of prophecy, it must be apparent that nothing has yet occurred in the history of the Church of Christ, that can at all be regarded as the fulfilment of these lofty predictions. There were no such permanent peace and prosperity enjoyed in the Jewish commonwealth after the return from the Chaldean captivity, as during the reigns of David and Solomon; yet in this chapter, events are foretold inexpressibly more glorious than any that preceded. Not even the advent and personal ministry of our Lord, nor the change that took place after His ascension to glory, exhausts the prophecy. The Church, it is true, was then greatly enlarged and purified, but she was likewise tried, afflicted, and exposed to frequent and severe persecution. This has been her condition in the world since, save at brief and widely-separated intervals. After the accession of Constantine the Great, the Church was rapidly corrupted by the influx of multitudes of hypocrites, by laxity of discipline, and by immoral practices. When the Roman empire was subverted by the Northern barbarians, dire calamities from without oppressed the Church; and within, she was vexed with ignorance, schism, and heresy. Corruption continued to spread, until truth and holiness had almost vanished from the earth, and darkness that might be felt had enveloped the nations. Amidst the general decay and confusion, the Papal system of supersti-

tion and idolatry rose in the West, and the Mahommedan imposture in the East—obscuring and extinguishing the light—oppressing the saints—and waging cruel and incessant warfare equally against Zion's King, the purity of the Church, and the liberties of mankind. Onward to the present time, the Church of Christ has been under great oppression. The kings of the symbolical earth make war with the Lamb. The woman remains in her hiding-place prepared in the wilderness; and the witnesses continue to testify in sackcloth, until the termination of Antichristian oppression. The Church is yet destined to pass through fiery trials, before she shall achieve her final glorious victory. The last decisive struggle between truth and error has yet to come. Babylon the Great is enthroned in splendour, and boasts of secure dominion on the eve of her downfall. Faithful witnesses must be slain and dishonoured, before their testimony shall triumph.

The predictions that relate to the Church's universal establishment and prosperity are therefore matter of animating hope, rather than of present realizing possession. The accomplishment, though future, is not, however, far distant. There is, we apprehend, an observable and very striking connexion between the significant words of the text and the closing portion of the preceding chapter, conjoined with the succeeding expressions of this Sixtieth Chapter. The appointed Saviour appears in majesty, armed as a warrior, to work deliverance for Zion. He is represented as investing himself with Divine panoply, and employing His powerful arm to effect deliverance for His oppressed people. Then it is declared—"So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West, and His glory from the rising of the sun." The order is remarkable. The expression does not alone mean that religion shall spread to the most remote regions; it indicates that the light is travelling backwards. Emanating from Judea in the East, it radiated to the remote West, when Britain and America were visited, and became glorious above other lands with the effulgence of the Sun of Righteousness. The prediction warrants the expectation that Gospel light will return again to the countries whence it at first issued. It is the era of Christian

missions. Men worship and fear the name of the Lord in Western nations, and betake themselves to devoted efforts for the diffusion of Divine truth. Light spreads to remote Oriental regions. India and Burmah, China and Japan, receive the knowledge of salvation. Idols are abolished; the Lord's name is revered in spiritual worship; and "the isles wait for His law." At this notable epoch, "the enemy comes in like a flood." Roused by the exertions of the faithful, and by the tokens of power from heaven accompanying their labours, he sets himself to oppose vigorously attempts to diffuse the light, and to subvert his kingdom of darkness. "The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Heroic and devoted men—a prepared instrumentality—are raised up. Endowed with an eminent spirit, they plead powerfully in behalf of Divine truth, and resist successfully the attacks of adversaries. The progress of the flood is arrested, and its swelling waves are rolled back. Truth advances, and triumphs over opposition. Light is breaking forth on every side. "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." The Apostle Paul applies this prediction to the future conversion and re-gathering of Israel.—(Romans xi. 26.) The gracious covenant-purpose concerning the Church is then accomplished. The Spirit abundantly conferred is continued from generation to generation. A devoted instrumentality for diffusing the truth shall be raised up, and numbers shall believe, profess, obey, and disseminate the Word of salvation in all succeeding ages. The lengthened continuance and perpetuity of the Church of Christ are thus foretold, as well as its enjoyment of the greatest of blessings. In this Sixtieth Chapter, its universal extent is predicted.

To all faithful watchmen and denizens of Zion, these bright and comprehensive announcements are deeply interesting. We may not be privileged in our day to behold the full brightness of this glory. But we are much nearer the morning dawn than was the Church delivered from Chaldean oppression; and there are evidences clearer and more unmistakable than any that our fathers saw, that the era of the Church's ultimate deliverance and completed salvation draws nigh. Amidst the obscurity that

yet beclouds the prospects of Zion, we should be consoled and animated by discerning the first streaks of the risen day—the sure indication that the dark night is parted, never again to return. Regarding ourselves as privileged to witness the begun fulfilment of these joyful predictions, we propose to consider briefly some of the *special privileges* which the Church in our day enjoys, and then to advert to the Divine call, exhibiting *her paramount duty*, and her high and honourable destination. “*Arise—shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*” May the Spirit of light, and love, and power enable us to hear, believe, and obey; and so to display and diffuse the light, that others may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven! Depending on His gracious influence, we shall consider—

- I. *Zion’s Distinguishing Privilege—“Thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”*
- II. *The Consequent Duty to which she is peculiarly called—“Arise—shine;” and*
- III. *The Way of Obedience—with Motives and Encouragements supplied by Present Privileges.*

I. THE CHURCH’S EMINENT PRIVILEGE.

Light, the purest of material elements, and one of the most beneficial and useful, is contrasted with darkness, and both are used figuratively in the text and context, as they are in innumerable other passages of Sacred Scripture. A condition of ignorance, affliction, and distress is designated darkness or night, as the word *light* is frequently used to denote knowledge, comfort, and happiness. Thus applied, the declaration of the text indicates—

First. THAT THE CHURCH’S NIGHT OF DARKNESS AND AFFLICTION IS PARTING.

The imagery of these opening verses is taken from the early dawn—the harbinger of the risen day. It implies that the former season, long continued, was one of obscurity, weeping, and sorrow. This has been the condition of the Church of Christ in the world, throughout much of her eventful history. While darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the

people, Zion has passed under the cloud, and her light has been hid in obscurity. At particular times, while her *internal* light has been diminished, the gloom has thickened around her—her trials from enemies have increased, and her prospects have become dark and forbidding. “We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.”—(Psalm lxxiv. 9.) The prophetic denunciation declares at once the sin and punishment of unfaithfulness. “Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision, and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.”—(Micah, iii. 6.)

The Church’s afflicted condition in the world may be said to be a *night* of idolatry and oppression—of the limited spread of Divine truth, and of sore and lengthened trouble. While to the world there is apparently a bright day of prosperity, the Church is exposed to manifold trial—tossed with tempest and not comforted. So are the faithful forewarned by the Saviour himself—“Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.” The time of Zion’s troubles, however, is predetermined, and it hastens to a close. The Redeemer’s presence restores light and comfort to His people.—“I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”—(John xvi. 22.) Believers are consoled with the assurance—“The night is far spent, the day is at hand; now is your salvation nearer than when ye believed.”—(Romans xiii. 11.) The reply of the watchman of Dumah to the inquiry—“What of the night?”—indicates that although partial darkness remains, and for a time this may deepen, as if the reign of night had returned, yet the morning approaches, bethinking a day of brightness and joy.—“The watchman said, the morning cometh, and also the night.”—(Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.) Manifold precious promises declare that this shall be the state of the Church in the concluding period of her history. When the spirit of holy liberality rests upon her members, it is declared of the Church—“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord

shall be thy rereward.”—(Isaiah lviii. 8.) And as the fruit of the intercession of Christ, and in answer to the prayers of His saints, it is promised that the righteousness of Zion “shall go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”—(Isaiah lxii. 1.) Such cheering predictions begin to be accomplished at the time when a thicker gloom is settling down upon the nations. This is expressly foretold in the second verse of the chapter—“For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.” The light beaming upon Zion appears more marked and vivid by the contrast. This, we apprehend, constitutes a prominent feature in the Church’s present condition—her night of sorrow and weeping parting, and the prospect of joy rising in the morning—and that too at the time when the darkness of ignorance, idolatry, and oppression is thickening throughout the nations, and when murky clouds portend the approach of a tempestuous night of judgment.

Secondly. THE GLORY OF GOD IN CHRIST MORE CLEARLY MANIFESTED.

In the text it is proclaimed—“The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;” and again—“The Lord,” or Jehovah, “shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee”—(verse 2); and in verse 19, speaking of the full effulgence of the manifestation, it is declared in the loftiest terms—“The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” The glowing and pregnant idea in these beautiful announcements is that of a bright luminary beaming down with power upon the lower creation—dispelling the shades—rendering dark objects bright by reflection—and making all to rejoice in His genial splendour. The glory promised is a *personal manifestation*—it is that of the exalted Mediator. His it is alone to reveal the Godhead, and He is “the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person.”—(Hebrews i. 3.) This glory of old shone with awe-inspiring splendour on Mount Sinai, when the Lord appeared in terrible majesty, and from His right hand went a fiery law. It rested

in the ancient tabernacle, dwelling between the cherubim, and covering the mercy-seat. It is the great promise of the latter times—the true Shechinah, or dwelling glory, covering the whole Church, instead of being any longer confined to a moveable tent or shut up in a narrow enclosure. “The Lord shall create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”—(Isaiah iv. 5.)

The glory which rises upon the Church is that of the person, offices, and salvation of Christ, her illustrious Head. He is the grand “Representative of Deity to our world.”* His name is Immanuel, God with us.” “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”—(John i. 14.) All Divine perfections are harmonized and illustriously displayed in Christ, and in Him “dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” The Deity of the Saviour is essential to all blessing in the Church—it is pre-eminently her glory. If the Redeemer were not “God over all,” He could not be spiritually present in all the worshipping assemblies of His people. Power less than omnipotent could not protect them against enemies; infinite wisdom is required for their direction; and nothing less than love that is eternal and unchangeable can effect their salvation. It is the glory of the Church that her Husband and Head is the “mighty God”—the Father of the everlasting age.”† “Thy Maker is thy Husband—thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel—the God of the whole earth shall He be called.”—(Isaiah liv. 3.) Hence the children of Zion have nothing to fear; “God is for them, and none can be against them.” In triumph may they say—“The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.” And here there is ample security for the enjoyment of all saving blessings. The Child born is the Prophet of the Highest. He goes “before the face of the Lord, to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins.”—(Luke i. 76.)

*Dr. Owen.

† Isaiah ix. 6,—“Septuagint.”

The Church's light is arisen, and her glory is come, as the cardinal truth of the Saviour's Divine character, and the perfection and sufficiency of His atoning work are, in our day, more widely made known and more cordially embraced than in former ages. The day of Socinian and Neological error is nearly over; and while in these countries and in America some leading Unitarians are evidently approximating nearer to avowed infidelity, others, especially in the latter country, give indications of a disposition favourable to evangelical truth. With the spread of the Word and the revival of true religion, the doctrine of the Saviour's Divinity is known and professed more widely throughout the nations.

The glory too of the *Mediator's royal authority* is more generally displayed in these last days; and in various parts of the earth is now seen and joyfully acknowledged. The universal dominion of Messiah, the Prince, is the Church's glory, and it furnishes to the world matter of the loftiest rejoicing. The King of Zion is Lord of universal nature. Angels of light worship and honour Him; devils are obedient to His word; earth's judges and potentates are required to do Him homage. He is Lord of the invisible world, and there is not an object in the vast universe exempted from His sovereign control. While He sets up His kingdom in the hearts of a willing people, He restrains and subdues their enemies, and renders all things subservient to the advancement of His glory and the salvation of His saints. "He is Head over all things to His Church, which is His body—the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 22.) The central truth of Christ's Headship is more generally confessed by the Church than in former times, and its vast importance is beginning to be felt and acknowledged. We rejoice in witness after witness being called forward to testify in behalf of the exalted prerogatives of the King of Zion. The Free Churches of Scotland, Switzerland, and France have in recent years uttered a noble testimony, and made great sacrifices for their maintenance. Others in various places, stirred by these bright examples, are pleading for Messiah's crown rights and for the Church's spiritual independence. We should hail this rising glory, and anticipate the

coming of the bright day, when the Mediator will take Him His great power, and reign, and when all princely thrones shall do Him willing homage—when He shall not only be confessed King in Zion, but likewise Governor among the nations, and Prince of the kings of the earth—when His “name shall be great among the Heathen,” and “incense and a pure-offering” shall be offered to Him, “from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same.” (Mal. i. 11.)

Thirdly. DIVINE TRUTH RAPIDLY AND EXTENSIVELY SPREADING.

The truth is emphatically God’s—the revelation of His will—the impress of His moral likeness—His grand means for enlightening and purifying the nations. It is moreover the Church’s highest privilege and glory. This is the charter of all her blessings—the instrument of all her victories—the foundation of all her joyful hopes. In the possession and prevalence of the truth, the Church realizes her exalted position; and high destiny, as the chosen instrument for enlightening the nations. The diffusion of the truth is to the Church a real and substantial blessing—it is her eminent glory. This is the light by which she shines before the world—the salt whereby she purifies the nations—the appointed means of her own enlargement. The spread of the truth is therefore matter of unfeigned rejoicing to the citizens of Zion, whatever may be the instrumentality by which it is propagated. “Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”—(Phil. i. 18.) The diffusion of revealed truth is the striking characteristic of our own times above any that preceded them. The Bible,—Zion’s light and glory, has wonderfully spread, and is spreading throughout the nations. How rapid and amazing has been the dissemination of the Scriptures during the last thirty or forty years! In celebrating the First Jubilee of that noble Institution—the British and Foreign Bible Society—and its first years of effort were necessarily spent in a work of preparation—it was reported that *forty-six millions* of copies of the Scriptures had been issued in some one hundred and sixty different languages; and twenty-six of these have, through such

efforts, become written tongues—the first book given to the barbarous tribes that speak them, being the Scriptures! By strange and unexpected providences, China has been opened to receive the Bible; and not only are Christians putting forth vigorous efforts to furnish to its teeming population the precious gift, but the powerful leader of a successful revolution in China is printing the Scriptures, and supplying copies in thousands to his followers. The Bible has been given to the degraded tribes of Africa, and to the millions of India, and has brought in its train civilization and comfort. It has penetrated the snows of Greenland and Labrador, and has enlightened the wandering savage of inhospitable climes with the knowledge of salvation. It has changed the cannibals of the South Seas into meek and loving Christians. The Word of God has struck off the chains of slavery in the West Indies; it has abolished the cruel rites of Suttee and infanticide, and the foul abominations of Juggernaut in India; it has cheered and animated the martyrs of Madagascar. It has spread the light of pure doctrine and holy hope through many parts of the antichristian earth; and confessors for Christ in France, and Tuscany, and Hungary attest that, despite of the violent attempts of the Man of sin to exclude the Scriptures, the Word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified. The New Testament Scriptures are everywhere in the hands of the Jews, and even the followers of Mahomet, in India, and Turkey, and Persia are now perusing with attention the records of our holy religion. The Word of God is spreading throughout the corrupt Churches of the East, in Syria, and Armenia, and Turkey, and has led multitudes to an evangelical profession. It has entered the scene of dire warfare, as a mightier power in the field than opposing armies—giving promise that whatever may be the issues of present fierce conflicts, the truth of God will ultimately be universally victorious. Of this rapid and wonderful diffusion of the Scriptures in recent days, it may be truly said, as of the first heralds of the cross—“Their line is gone forth into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” Whatever may be the coming destiny of nations, the Scriptures thus widely diffused will never be destroyed. God’s Word cannot

return void, but shall prosper in that whereto it has been sent. The light and glory have arisen, so as not again to be eclipsed or expelled—the darkness that covered the earth shall never return.

Not only have the Scriptures been widely spread—the truths of the glorious Gospel have of late been more extensively and fully made known in Christian lands, and in other parts of the world, than in any preceding period. Compared with almost any portion of the eighteenth century, how remarkable and cheering the change that has taken place throughout these countries and in various parts of Continental Europe! The glorious Gospel is now proclaimed in hundreds of pulpits in Britain, and thousands assemble weekly to hear the tidings of gratuitous salvation. Evangelical principle is reviving in Germany and Switzerland, in Prussia and France, displacing a withering neology and a debasing infidelity. The truth as it is in Jesus is faithfully preached by hundreds of Christian missionaries in all parts of the world—to Jews and Pagans—to the votaries of the Papacy—and to the disciples of the Arabian Impostor. The light of life is thus penetrating every quarter of earth's dark places, and the glory of the cross is beginning to beam upon the most distant nations. Salvation by free grace is eminently the Church's glory; and most cheering it is to notice that Protestant missionaries of different names seem in every place to make this the grand central principle of their ministrations. The Apocalyptic vision is in process of rapid realization; "The angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell in the earth" is flying through the heaven, and ere long the joyful sound will be proclaimed to the people of every nation, and people, and tongue.—(Rev. xiv. 6.) The extension of evangelical missions in our day is truly wonderful and most cheering. While the Church is awakening to a due sense of its solemn responsibility to make known the Redeemer's light and salvation, the movements of Providence are all contributing to urge forward the glorious undertaking. The sovereignty of heathen nations is transferred to Protestant powers, that thus millions of pagans may be evangelized. Revolution and conquest prepare a highway for the chariots of

salvation. The barriers of caste and national prejudice are thrown down—the fanes of paganism are tottering to their fall. Rapid modes of communication are bringing distant lands into near contact, that Zion's glory may shine upon them with redoubled splendour; while the progress of commerce and civilization, and of ideas of human rights and liberties is subserving the same beneficent purpose. One honoured Institution—the Religious Tract Society—is diffusing throughout the world innumerable copies of excellent evangelical works, and is despatching its “winged preachers” to the inhabitants of all nations. Who can estimate the value of such an instrumentality? When the Spirit of power shall descend, in answer to prayer, upon the seed so extensively sown, then the glory of the Lord, beaming from Zion, shall be fully revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

Fourthly. THE GRAND PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH'S PROFESSION AND TESTIMONY ARE BECOMING MORE EXTENSIVELY KNOWN AND APPRECIATED.

A faithful profession is the light which the Church holds forth before the world, and the maintenance of a testimony for precious truth is her distinguishing privilege and honour. In the ancient tabernacle, the Shechinah rested above the ark of the testimony; and still the Church, lifting up and unfurling a standard for truth, appears at once attractive and majestic. “Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners?”—(Song vi.) To ancient Israel it was declared—(Isaiah xliii. 10.)—“Ye are my witnesses;” and to display a testimony in behalf of the Divine Unity and of revealed truth amidst the world's darkness constituted their peculiar and eminent dignity. The same office was assigned to the heralds of the cross by the ascending Saviour when He said—“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”—(Acts i. 8.) While every faithful minister and every true believer is a witness for Christ, a special position is assigned to a few, who in different ages and countries bear testimony to truths which

nearly concern the Saviour's honour, and which encounter a principal measure of the world's opposition and contempt. These are the "Two Witnesses" against the usurpations and corruptions of Antichrist—the "Two Anointed Ones"—and the "Two Torch-Bearers," that stand before the God of the earth.—(Rev. xi. 4.)* Their character is eminent and illustrious. There is glory connected with the testimony which they bear, as it concerns the dignity and rights of Messiah, King of Zion and Prince of the kings of the earth. They are sustained in the conflict with evil; power is given them; blessings from above rest upon their labours, and judgments are sent at their call, to avenge their wrongs and to destroy their enemies; and when their testimony shall have been finished, in the final triumph of their cause, the nations of the earth have cause of lofty exultation. They ascend up to heaven in the sight of their enemies. Babylon the Great falls, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. The witnesses are yet clothed in sackcloth, depressed and in mourning; but as we are approaching the last conflict of truth with error, the great principles of their testimony are more clearly brought out and displayed. Fundamental truths, held by approved witnesses, are becoming more extensively known, and are commanding a more general homage. The names of faithful witnesses of a former age are embalmed with honour, and justice is beginning to be rendered, even from unexpected quarters, to the memory of such illustrious confessors as Knox and Rutherford, Henderson and Cameron, and Renwick. This may be done, it is true, to some extent, where the principles of a "martyr-testimony" are not embraced; but when the names and spirit of the "sons of the Covenant" command respect, men will not readily be induced to believe that they died so nobly, testifying for wicked and detestable principles. The *resurrection* of the witnesses will be accompanied with the spread and triumph of their testimony; and though this joyful event has not yet fully come, we have plain indications that it is rapidly approaching. The doctrine

* So the Sacred Original may be literally rendered.

of *Messiah's Headship*—the cardinal article of a faithful testimony, is now confessed by multitudes. Since the secession of the “Free Church of Scotland” it has been avowed and proclaimed by earnest and devoted men to an extent unknown for generations. In India, Africa, and America devoted missionaries have testified and suffered on behalf of the prerogatives of Zion’s King. Heathen converts and native preachers have re-echoed the joy-inspiring sound, and have openly professed allegiance to Messiah, the Prince. European nations, under Erastian oppression, have heard asserted the rights of the enthroned Mediator; and Protestant Churches long enthralled have begun to sigh for spiritual independence, and have, to some extent, obtained it. The distant isles of the sea have been called to wait for the Redeemer’s law; and in the wide diffusion of our Westminster Standards, and with them of the great articles of a martyr-testimony, we see the dawn of that bright day, when “the Lord shall be King over all the earth, when there shall be one Lord, and His name one.”—(Zechariah xiv. 9.)

The *supreme authority of the Bible*—another leading article of a faithful testimony—is now contended for by the friends of truth and the advocates of human rights in different countries. The Word of God is applied as the Divine “measuring reed,” to measure “the temple, the altar, and them that worship therein.”—(Rev. xi. 1.) The claim is advanced that civil systems and those that administer them should be conformed to this unerring standard; and the obligation of laws is tested by an appeal to the “higher law” of God’s Word. In the contest against slavery in America, noble-minded men plead that States are under law to God, and even assume the high ground of refusing to act under a constitution which is evidently unscriptural, and to administer laws which are opposed to Divine Revelation. The American President, not long since, did public homage to Scriptural requirement and example, by taking the oath of office with an uplifted hand. May we not hope that an eminent design of the general diffusion of the Word, soon to be accomplished, is that this supreme standard shall be universally applied to all systems, civil, political, and ecclesiastical?

Again, the importance and obligation of Scriptural vows

are beginning to be more generally felt and acknowledged. By the federal vows of our ancestors, our land was "married to the Lord," and "delighted in." A devoted Christian will not hesitate to trace the eminent exaltation and influence of Britain and its singular protection, to the blessing from on high upon a nation in covenant with God. To the Church, in our day, the cheering prospect is afforded of the glory returning to the land, in an awakened sense of Covenant-obligation, and in the nation's Scriptural and long-forgotten vows coming into remembrance. Public-spirited Protestants, in resisting the aggressions of the man of sin, have acknowledged the need of a "Solemn League," as a bond of union and co-operation. When the Waldenses recently celebrated the return of their ancestors to their native valleys, they publicly read the vow that animated them in their struggle against Romish oppressors. The Covenants of our forefathers are evidently rising into notice, and their principles and spirit are reviving. During the past season, the Synod of one section of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland has publicly and solemnly renewed the British Covenant.* The "testimony" of the Free Church of Scotland has recognized the obligation of those deeds upon the nation to the latest posterity, and numbers of devoted men in that large body are now seeking that there should be a speedy and general return to precious principles long forgotten and abandoned. Our own recent solemn Act of Covenant-renovation, as a Synod, and the joyful engaging in the work by the congregations of the church in this land, are replete with encouragement. Weak as may be these beginnings, and faint as may yet be the light of the dawn, may we not trust that the Lord has returned to Zion with mercies? May we not cherish the expectation, that the prophetic words of the Martyr, Guthrie, are about to be verified, even to a larger extent than he uttered them—"THE COVENANTS SHALL YET BE THE REVIVING OF BRITAIN?" May we not hope that the bright day is hastening on apace, when, in the general acknow-

* This was done by the Synod of Original Seceders, in Glasgow, in April, 1853.

ledgement of Britain's time-honoured vows, nations and their rulers shall assemble to serve the Highest Lord?

Fifthly. IN WORKING MANIFOLD DELIVERANCE FOR HIS CHURCH.

The Church has been so long oppressed, and her hope is so much fixed on promised deliverance, that when it is in any measure enjoyed, it may be emphatically declared—"Thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is arisen upon thee." Long and earnestly have God's faithful servants prayed—"Oh! that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" The predestined period of suffering draws to a close, and the groanings of "the mournful prisoners" ascend on high. The Lord arises to plead His own cause, and to avenge the wrongs of His people. By "fearful works," He answers the prayers of His saints. The manifestation of God's salvation is accompanied with the infliction of vengeance upon the Church's enemies. "The Lord hath made known His salvation; His righteousness hath He openly shown in the sight of the heathen."—(Psalm xcvi. 2.) The deliverance wrought for the Church is twofold—1. *External*, in bringing down powerful enemies—overturning oppressive systems—removing impediments to the progress of truth, and rendering the movements of Providence subservient to its advancement; and 2. *Internal*, in spiritual rest and peace enjoyed, and in gracious power accompanying the dispensation of ordinances. Deliverances of both kinds have been recently experienced, and evidences are not wanting that her glorious King is working for His Church "manifold salvation" in midst of the earth. The doom of wicked and oppressive powers is fixed—the proclamation has gone forth—"I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him."—(Ezekiel xxi. 27.) The work of subversion is already begun. Immoral and ungodly systems are tottering to their downfall. The symbolical heavens and earth are shaken, preparatory to their removal, and that the immovable kingdom of Messiah may be brought in and remain. How rapidly and unex-

pectedly have obstacles to the spread of the Gospel and the establishment of the Church of late been removed! China has been opened for the Bible and the messengers of salvation. India, with its millions of British subjects, is freed from pagan oppression; and the barriers of caste, and cruel idolatry, and false philosophy, are rapidly dissolving. Mahomedanism is losing its power in Turkey, and Protestant rights are guaranteed in a manner which a few years ago the most sanguine could not have anticipated. Throughout Popish countries the Papacy is shorn of its strength; and whatever spasmodic efforts it may put forth in Protestant nations, it is evidently hastening to its irretrievable destruction. In these countries, though Popery may gain some temporary advantages, through unprincipled statesmen, its power to deceive a Protestant people is gone, and the time for the spiritual emancipation of its enthralled votaries is approaching. A Popish government has restored civil rights to the Waldenses; and in the Canton de Vaud, liberty of evangelical worship, long refused, is now enjoyed. The "Little Stone" is on its onward progress, and before it one opposing power after another rapidly disappears, giving joyful intimation that ere long the last vestiges of idolatry, and misrule, and oppression shall be swept away by the resistless winds of judgment. Soon shall countless voices of delivered captives from mystical Babylon utter the gladsome invitation—"The Lord hath wrought our righteousness. Come, and let us declare in Zion the Work of the Lord our God."—(Jer. li. 10.) Nor less joyful are the *internal* deliverances wrought for the Church. Error and false doctrine have to some extent been rejected. The return to Scriptural standards by the Churches in Britain and America, and in some parts of the Continent, is itself a great deliverance, and is full of hopeful promise for the future. Freedom from the control of Erastian rulers, and the attainment of the Church's spiritual independence in Scotland, and Switzerland, and France, are privileges of the highest value; and the peace, and rest, and increase of the spirit of concord and unity within the Church, declare that the Deliverer has come to Zion, to heal her breaches, and to repair her desolations. Much, it is true, remains yet to be accom-

plished before the Church's deliverance shall be complete. But enough has been already done to animate believing hopes. The Lord has given His people rest, and divisions and animosities have ceased, according as they have resolutely avouched adherence to His truth, and have walked in the way of Covenant-obedience. The blessing of primitive times has been in some measure realized—"Then had the Churches rest; and walking in the fear of the Lord, were edified, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."—(Acts ix. 31.)

Lastly. THE PROMISED EFFUSION OF THE SPIRIT IS BEGUN.

This is the grand promise of the last times. "Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field," &c.—(Isaiah xxxii. 14.) "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."—(Isaiah xlv. 3.) The Spirit's plentiful effusion is the great distinctive blessing of the New Economy—the full glory and brightness of the Church. The last dispensation is pre-eminently the ministration of the Spirit. On this depends all the saving power of the Word, and the spiritual efficacy of religious ordinances. When the Spirit is plentifully conferred, light and love abound in the Church—spiritual converts are multiplied, and the blessings of growth, and increase, and of special dedication, are largely enjoyed. The bright pictures of sacred prediction are then exemplified. Streams are made to flow in the desert, and rivers in the wilderness: the wilderness becomes pools of water. "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days." While the full effusion of the Spirit is yet future, there is evidence in our day that the promise has begun to be accomplished. The *extensive conviction* throughout the Church of the need of the Spirit's quickening power is an indication of revival already commenced. Before the resurrection of "the dry bones," the prophet was directed to mark and bewail their lifeless condition. His deep and painful conviction was the precursor of a stirring amid these piles of death; and when under this overpowering feeling he preached and prayed, the spirit of life entered into them, and they stood up instinct

with vital energy—an exceeding great army. As the glimmerings of the morning star speak of the darkness that was, but is passing away, and herald in the rising of a cloudless sun, so the deep impression entertained throughout the Church, that she does not occupy the high position that she ought, and her mourning over her withered condition, proclaim that a time of refreshing and revival is approaching.

Again, *the wide-spread missionary spirit* that prevails throughout the Church, and the progress of evangelical missions indicate the Spirit's work, and give earnest of a more abundant effusion. This spirit is enlarging and strengthening continually; and there is ample testimony borne to the Word of the Saviour's grace, preached for the conversion of the nations. The Spirit from on high has assuredly accompanied the Gospel proclaimed by modern missionaries to Jews and Gentiles. Everything is beckoning the Church onward to certain success. God is emphatically calling her to enlarge the place of her tent—to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes—assuring her that she shall break forth on the right hand and the left, and her seed shall inherit the Gentiles. When we behold the Church responding to the call, claiming the heathen as the Saviour's inheritance, and gathering in her trophies almost before she has entered on the conflict; when we hear of whole islands abandoning their idols, and turning to the Lord, may we not take all this as clear evidence that the first large drops of the Spirit have begun to descend upon the pastures in the wilderness, presaging the speedy coming of showers of blessing? May we not regard it as a precious encouragement to perseverance in the Lord's work, believing that He is about to open the windows of heaven, and rain down on Zion peace and righteousness? Moreover, an *increased spirit of prayer* in the Church declares that the Spirit is operating to revive His work in the midst of the years. For this will the Lord be inquired of by the house of Israel, to hearken and do it. It was when the prophet prayed that "the Spirit and Breath" came from the four winds as the spirit of quickening and life. The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was preceded by fervent, united, and persevering prayer. In various places the same Spirit has begun to operate

throughout the Church—the token at once of restored life and vigour, and the earnest of manifold blessings which shall come in answer to prayer, to refresh and fertilize the Lord's weary heritage. And finally, we are encouraged to expect a fuller effusion of the Spirit from the *revivals which are actually taking place*. Even admitting that conviction is not conversion, and that temporary excitements may not be productive of lasting spiritual benefit, it seems to be undeniable that the Lord has heard the prayers of His servants, and that He has begun to pour out the Spirit from on high. In the Church, in these lands, we have had a "little revival in the house of our bondage." In various parts of Christendom, in Turkey, in Syria, in India, and the isles of the South Seas, the Lord has made bare His holy arm, and has made known His salvation, and declared His righteousness in the sight of the heathen. Should we not abound in fervent supplications for farther and greater blessings? Thus saith the Lord, and His Maker, the Holy One of Israel, ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the works of my hands command ye me." "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not."—(Isaiah xlv. 11; Jeremiah xxxiii. 3.)* We advert to

II. THE CONSEQUENT DUTY TO WHICH THE CHURCH IS PECULIARLY CALLED.

This is represented in the text as twofold, and is declared in terms that are familiar to the prophets, especially to the Evangelical Seer, the son of Amos. Because of the advent of her light, and the glory come upon her, Zion is commanded—1. **TO ARISE**; and, 2. **TO SHINE**. The injunction implies that the Church is previously in a low, dejected condition, hidden in obscurity and enveloped in darkness. The ancient Church was in such a state when a forlorn captive in Babylon. As a widow forsaken and desolate, she sat alone—low, oppressed,

* For some of the thoughts expressed in this last remark, the author is indebted to "Lectures on Revivals of Religion," by Ministers of the Church of Scotland—especially to the Lecture in the Series by Rev. John Macnaughtan.

and sorrowful—true to the designation—“This is Zion, whom no man looketh after.” The enjoyment of returning favour and blessing—the coming of light and glory—calls for an altered spirit and new duties, befitting her changed condition. Babylon, in the prospect of her approaching doom, is bid to “come down and sit in the dust;” (Isaiah xlvi. 1.) and on the other hand, the Church, revisited in mercy, is repeatedly commanded to *arise* from oppression and dejection, and to betake herself to a career of holy activity. “Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion—put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city—Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.”—(Isaiah lii. 1, 2.) This is the position which increased privileges demand her to assume, and which alone is suitable to her restored spiritual condition. Regarding the same call as addressed to the Church in our day, in view of enlarged liberty, and multiplied blessing, and in prospect of the important work allotted to her, and the period of Antichrist’s downfall, we consider the command as inviting the Church to—

1. *Awake to a sense of the Value of Spiritual Privileges, and of Consequent Obligation to Duty.*

The enjoyment of privilege constitutes an obligation to duty, as it supplies motives to its performance. “Unto whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”—(Luke xii. 48.) It has been commonly remarked, that Christians, in our day, live below their privileges. In consequence, their spirit is low, opportunities are not improved, and we are in danger of being dealt with as “slothful and wicked servants.” The Church is invited and commanded in the text to *arise* from all indolence, and to recognize the obligation flowing from special privilege. We should consider seriously “what great things” the Lord has done for us, and what return we are required to make for manifold benefits. Our duty is at once to arise from a state which is as dishonouring to God as it is injurious to ourselves. The Spirit’s call invites us to an awakened sense of obligation as preparatory to the reception of blessing—“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead

and Christ shall give thee life.”—(Eph. v. 15.) We should consider our precious ordinances—our repeated vows—our lengthened season of blessing—as supplying motives to renewed diligence and holy activity. By eminent privileges, we have been allured to God’s service. The Lord has drawn us “with bands of a man, with cords of love.” Our paramount duty is to cherish continually a sense of our obligation to be the Lord’s. Thus will the Church arise and shine. Thus will individuals, feeling that they are not their own, but as bought with a price, “Yield themselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness.”—(Rev. vi. 13.)

2.—*Earnestly seek quickening and revival from decay.*

Even true Christians and the best churches frequently need to be revived and quickened. It is observable that in the 119th Psalm, the petition “Quicken me,” occurs much more frequently than any other.

The church of Sardis is warned and admonished—“Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”—(Rev. iii. 2.) The “wise virgins,” as well as the “foolish,” “slumbered and slept,” while the Bridegroom tarried. A venerable writer* alleges that this indicates the condition of the church before the Lord’s glorious appearance; and such would seem to be the reference when it is said—“When the Son of Man cometh, will he find faith in the earth?”—(Luke, xviii. 8.) Amidst much that is cheering and encouraging in the aspects of the present times, a state of barrenness and decay exists to a large extent throughout the Christian community. Numbers are “settled upon their lees,” and are “at ease in Zion.” Not a few are contented with “a name to live,” while in reality “they are dead.” Many have “a form of godliness,” but deny “the power thereof.” Such a state is displeasing to God, and most dangerous to those who are characterized by it. Its tendency is to hold formalists in fatal security—to confirm the ungodly—and to mar effectually the progress of true religion.

* Shepherd’s Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Warned of such danger, and apprehensive of its approach in “the perilous times” that are coming, we should earnestly seek that the Spirit would revive the Church. His office is to restore the decayed, and to invigorate “the things that remain.” When the Spirit is poured out upon “the thirsty and the dry ground,” there is rapid and luxuriant growth. “They shall spring up as among the grass, and as willows by the water courses.”—(Isaiah, xliv. 3.) The primitive Church, blessed with the copious effusion of the Spirit, became instinct with a new life, and was distinguished by holy and devoted effort. The flame of missionary zeal glowed in every bosom, and burned with intense ardour upon every altar. Scattered by persecution, the primitive Christians went everywhere preaching the Word. The Gentile Churches became centres of light amidst surrounding darkness. From them “sounded out the Word of the Lord” to all the regions round about.—(1 Thes. i. 8.) We “arise” when we become emulous of this bright example. Fervently concerned that the Church may be aroused from apathy, we should seek for ourselves quickening from on high, and, like the prophet, lamenting decay and expecting promised enlargement, we should importunately pray—“O Lord, receive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known—in death remember mercy.”—(Hab. iii. 2.)

3.—*A Call to Holy and Sustained Exertion.*

This is peculiarly the Church’s mission in the world. Her ministers and office-bearers are “labourers” in Christ’s vineyard. They are spiritual “watchmen”—warned at their peril not to intermit their vigilance, as upon their fidelity the safety of the city is dependent. Her members are “servants” employed in the Lord’s work—they are “soldiers” enlisted in a warfare from which there is no discharge, and forewarned that unless they fight to the end, they cannot obtain the victory. The duty required of all is to be self-devoted—to be always and wholly engaged in the work assigned them by a glorious Master. Sustained effort is imperatively demanded by the Lord of the vineyard of all his servants. Hence, and not from mere profession, He forms His estimate of character, and brings forth the judgment of every man; and on this ground issues forth

the sentence of approval or rejection. "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven."—(Matt. vii. 21.) "I KNOW THY WORKS," is the declaration of Him "who walks amid the golden candlesticks," concerning each of the seven primitive Churches, and on this ground they are adjudged to honour, or marked for condemnation.

Self-denied, laborious, and sustained exertion is—

Specially demanded in our day of the Church, in all its sections, and on the part of all its members.

The work to be accomplished is of vast magnitude and importance. The world is to be evangelized—the ignorant are to be instructed—and perishing outcasts are to be reclaimed.* The house of the Lord is to be built up—nations must be delivered from darkness, idolatry, and oppression, and reduced to subjection to the Mediator. The testimony of the Church is to be rendered triumphant over error, and the glory of Zion's King is to fill the earth. In this enterprise of mercy, all that bear the Christian name are called actively to engage, and none may evade the summons, but on pain of incurring the dread wrath of the exalted Sovereign to whom they have professed allegiance. With numerous doors of opportunity thrown open—with a thousand importunate calls from various quarters, the Church is urged to devoted exertion. There is "plenty of work to do," and Christians are instructed "how to do it." Churches will be judged in the world, according as they are earnestly engaged in the Redeemer's work, or as they evade and neglect it. Even now they are favoured, and may expect aid in their undertakings, as they are instinct with enlightened zeal, and prosecute vigorously schemes of Christian usefulness. Holding forth the Word of life, others are attracted to their fellowship, and

* It has been calculated that at the rate even of the present immense circulation of the Scriptures by Bible Societies, it would require some hundreds of years to supply the whole population of the world with the Word of God. Not fewer than *two hundred thousand* ministers of the Gospel are needed to supply the means of salvation to India alone. "From the city of Moscow to the mouth of the Euphrates, thence to the border of South Africa, and back to the starting-point—in this immense triangle, with a population of *seventy millions* of souls, there is not one Christian mission."

are constrained to say—“ *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*” It is every way right that Churches should be estimated according to this standard; and we may certainly expect that this will be still more the rule of judgment in times that are approaching. No profession, however orthodox, will avail—no testimony, however valuable, will spread, if the Church’s appropriate work is neglected. *Our profession as Christians* demands such exertion. Bought with an incalculable price, we are not our own. The call and command of our Master to each of His servants is—“ *Son, go work in my vineyard.*” We owe all to Christ, and we are bound to devote all to His service. The talents entrusted to us are given with the charge—“OCCUPY TILL I COME.” When the final account is rendered, the Lord declares the “slothful” a wicked servant, and judges a talent unimproved as mispent and wasted. *Genuine faith works by love.* It impels to holy activity, and the love of Christ, abiding in the heart, constrains to live not to ourselves, but to be devoted to Him who died for us and rose again. *Our own solemn vows* bind us, moreover, to sustained holy effort. In the Church’s recent Bond, we have publicly declared that we dedicate ourselves to the great work of making known the Saviour’s light and salvation throughout the nations. Can any engagement be more solemn and important? We should remember continually that the vows of God are upon us; and cheerfully devoting ourselves, our time, and substance to His work, we should labour, and pray that men may be blessed in Christ, and that all nations may call Him blessed.

4.—*To receive and seek an increase of Scriptural and saving light.*

The marginal reading of the command in the text “Shine,” as it is in the Hebrew, is “be enlightened,” and may denote—embrace and surrender yourselves to the light. We should aim ourselves to be the recipients of the light, that we may communicate it to others. This is indispensable to all influence for good, either by our profession, or instructions, or example. The connexion is settled and invariable—those who are to illuminate others must themselves be first enlightened. “*Ye were once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord—walk as the children of light.*”—(Eph. v. 8.) The light of saving know-

ledge—of holiness and comfort—we must receive from Christ—from the Word—and by the agency of the Spirit. By looking to the Sun of Righteousness, we are enlightened; and as we behold His glory, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, and we shine by reflexion.—(2 Cor. iii. 18.) The Scriptures are a light from heaven “shining in a dark place,” and when practically employed, they subserve the purpose for which revelation was given to man—they are “a light to the feet, and a lamp to the path.” The Spirit’s office is to “glorify” Christ, and to take the things which are His and show them to His people.—(John xvi. 14.) He opens and applies the Scriptures—illuminates the understanding, and fills the soul with Divine light and consolation. We should hail the discoveries of the Word—pray that the eyes of our understandings may be enlightened—and surrender our whole minds to the influence of revealed truth. Our duty is to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—(2 Peter iii. 18.) The two parts of the precept are inseparably connected—advancement in holiness is in proportion to increase in the knowledge of Christ. The special promise of the last times to the Church encourages the expectation of a large increase of light. “*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*”—(Daniel xii. 2.) “*The light of the moon shall be as the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.*”—(Isaiah xxx. 26.) Looking for the fulfilment of these cheering predictions, the Church, in our day, is under special obligation to employ all appointed means for advancing in Scriptural knowledge. Saving light expands the mind, and elevates its subject in the scale of intellect. Witnesses for truth, to be influential of good, must be manly, intrepid, and intelligent. The Church, to be faithful to her high vocation, has many important works to perform, none of which can be adequately accomplished without the reception and increase of light. The Scriptural instruction of the youth entrusted to her care—the training of the future ministry—and the diffusion of Scriptural truth throughout the nations—these are among her principal

functions, which cannot be duly performed without the previous reception of light. A teachable disposition—an eager desire to learn—must distinguish those who would advance in knowledge and be instructors of others. Besides, the Church, in its pastorate and membership, should hold forth a *high standard of intelligence*, equally to the masses in ignorance, and to those who possess the acquirements of secular learning. Men everywhere, seeing her light, should be attracted, and constrained to say—“Come, and let us walk in the light of the living.” Bright prospects beam upon the Church of a future glorious increase of Scriptural and saving light. “*The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*”—(Habbakuk ii. 14.) The means extensively enjoyed shall prove effectual. The “vail of the covering,” spread over all nations, shall be rent asunder, and “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” Kings shall come to Zion’s light, and queens to the brightness of her rising. Our eminent duty is to anticipate this joyful consummation; and as we welcome the dawn, and receive the first rays of the morning, to arise and ourselves shine, that others may be brought too to rejoice in the light of salvation.

Finally, *To spread the light of a faithful testimony as widely as possible, and to shine by a holy example.*

The grand duty required of Christ’s witnesses is to display a “banner for truth,” and to illustrate its excellence and power by a pure and consistent example. The command, to “bind up the testimony” and “seal the law,” among the “disciples,” enjoins a special duty for times of difficulty and trial.—(Isaiah viii. 16.) It imports that we are not, even when exposed to danger, to unloose, or cast away, or compromise any part of a testimony for truth. In full accordance with this are the frequent injunctions of the Word—“Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.”—(Jude 3.) “Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” “Because thou hast kept the word of patience, I also will keep thee in the hour of temptation.”—(Rev. iii. 10, 11.) It is an equally important duty to “*hold forth the Word of life.*”—(Phil. ii. 12.) This is the great work of faithful witnesses in the

present day. The honour of Christ demands His friends to assert boldly His claims to supreme sovereignty and universal subjection. Civil and ecclesiastical communities require that the true principles of union and liberty should be openly exhibited. Approved witnesses are appointed to display and diffuse the light—for dispelling the darkness of ignorance and error. In the last days of Antichrist, the “Heralds of revival”* go forth, each with his distinct proclamation loudly sounded—the precursors of Babylon’s downfall. The testimony for precious truth, as opposed to prevailing error, is to be brought out and applied, even at the risk of exposing to peculiar trials. Such an exhibition subserves the most valuable purposes. Thus is the truth preserved and transmitted, and thus too will the cause of righteousness eventually triumph. “*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives to the death.*”—(Rev. xii. 11.) A distinct and manly testimony is always to be offered when any article of truth is assailed or in danger of being overlooked; and it should never be withheld because of opposition or unpopularity. The truth, exhibited in the form of a testimony, excites men to think and examine; and ultimately its intrinsic excellence will be acknowledged, and opposing error defeated.

Our testimony to be efficient must be distinguished by two prominent characteristics. The truth must be *spoken in love, and confirmed and recommended by a holy example*. We must love the persons of men, while we oppose and detest their errors. We must ever cherish the Catholic spirit of our holy religion, which requires us, as we have opportunity, to do good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith. “**SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**” must be our motto while advocating the claims of Messiah, the Prince, and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. That our testimony may be productive of salutary effects, it must be eminently *practical*. It must be embodied in the life, and shine forth in the conduct. To this we are peculiarly obliged by our

* Thus the three Apocalyptic angels (Rev. xiv.) are appropriately designated by Dr. M’Leod, in his “Lectures on the Revelation.”

Covenanted profession. In our last *Term of Communion*, we declare, as a fundamental article of our fellowship—"the practical adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour, by walking in all His commandments and ordinances blamelessly." Our fathers' Covenant, which we joyfully acknowledge as ours too, binds us "each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation."* Our Christian profession requires us to let our "light shine before men," that they seeing our good works, may glorify our heavenly Father. The beauty, honour, and power of our holy religion are seen here. When Christians appear as "Living Epistles," to be seen and read of all men, their character is developed—their piety shines forth in attractive lustre—and the light is diffused, and increases. The Church then becomes the blessed instrument of its own enlargement. Its ministers are the "glory of Christ," each aiming to have as his motto—"a burning and a shining light," and its members testifying for truths that concern the dignity and honour of its exalted Head, appear "in the beauty of holiness, like dew from the womb of the morning." We consider

III. HOW WE ARE ENABLED TO OBEY THE COMMAND TO ARISE AND SHINE; and we present *some Motives and Encouragements to Obedience*.

It is not of ourselves to arise and shine. Nothing is so difficult to lay aside as spiritual sloth, whether in relation to individuals or ecclesiastical communities. The Church has had long seasons of lukewarmness and decay, as well as of darkness and oppression. At such a period, many are sunk in carnal security, and are prone to self-deception. The "foolish virgins" rose and trimmed their lamps, and, equally with the wise, went forth confidently to meet the Bridegroom. The "slothful servant" presented to the Lord his talent unimproved, vainly expecting approval and commendation. The members of the Laodicean Church thought they were rich and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, while, in reality, they were "poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked." If we arise and shine, it must be wholly through—

• Solemn League and Covenant.

I. DIVINE POWER AND INFLUENCE.

No strength of argument, not even temporary convictions of duty, will awaken the slothful, or excite those that are decayed, to arise and shine. We are responsible for employing faithfully the means of revival; but it is God alone who worketh "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Not the prophet's awakening preaching, nor even his earnest prayers, but "the Spirit and Breath" coming from the four winds, quickened the dry bones. Repeated gracious promises warrant the expectation of Divine power and influence in the Church, and form our strongest argument in prayer for this great blessing—"Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."—(Ezekiel xxxvii. 12.) "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean, and from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."—(Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, 29.) Under the agency of the blessed Spirit, the light penetrates—the Word comes in demonstration and in power. The glory shed upon the Church is attractive and transforming. Divine power imparted impels to holy exertion. The influence of the Spirit is gracious and irresistible; and whether for the removal of evils that have long oppressed the Church, or for the enjoyment of blessings which she greatly needs, this important agency is all-desirable. We should honour the Spirit, and earnestly plead for the copious effusion promised in the latter days. For the supply of devoted labourers—for the efficacy of ordinances—for all the Church's peculiar works—this grand blessing is indispensably required. The work is exclusively God's, and to Him alone pertains the glory. Let us ourselves labour to "live and walk in the Spirit;" and feeling the urgent need of Divine interposition for Zion's deliverance and salvation, let us importunately plead—"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord—awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old."—(Isaiah li. 10.) "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"—(2 Kings ii. 14.)

2. CAREFUL REJECTION OF WHATEVER WOULD OBSTRUCT OR OBSCURE THE LIGHT.

Many things, in our day, obscure the Church's profession, and prevent the light from shining forth, either to display its native lustre, or as a medium of illumination. Connexion with immoral civil systems—a worldly or lukewarm spirit cherished—low, carnal conversation indulged—drinking usages followed—tend to mar the legitimate influence of Christianity, and to hinder others from seeing and appreciating Zion's glory. The example of professors thus distinguished, like *an ignis fatuus*, only allures to mislead and destroy. If we arise and shine, we must be deeply concerned to have obstructions removed, and to reject everything that is inconsistent with a Christian profession and a holy character. Our primary duty is to cast "stumbling blocks" out of the way of God's people, while we open the gates and invite "the righteous nation that keepeth the truth to enter in."—(Isaiah xxvi. 2.) The Ministers of the sanctuary have a chief interest in this matter. When their aim is to be esteemed refined gentlemen or distinguished scholars, rather than holy men of God—when they entangle themselves unduly with the affairs of this life, instead of addicting themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word, they excite or confirm prejudices against religion, and mar any salutary influence of their ministry. Let ministers habitually remember the apostle's solemn counsel to Timothy—"Meditate on these things—Give thyself wholly to them," and dread His fearful warning—"Lest after I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—(1 Timothy iv. 12 ; 1 Cor. ix. 27.)* The members of the Church, too, if they would reflect the risen light, must mortify internal corruption, and refrain from all outward conduct that is blameworthy or doubtful. The light of our profession should neither be confined nor obscured. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Our

* The original expression (1 Timothy iv. 12.) "Give thyself wholly to them," is stronger than in our version. It is literally rendered—"Be wholly in them," implying complete separation to the things of the ministry and full dedication.

Lord admonishes us—"If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."—(Matthew vi. 22.) While the Church should aim to promote *internal purity*, as essential to all approved union and to future enlargement, Christians should be distinguished for candour, simplicity, and godly sincerity. "Let him show out of a good conversation his work with meekness of wisdom."—(James iii. 13.) "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."—(1 Peter ii. 12.)

3. ABOUNDING PRAYER.

This spirit has distinguished all times when Christians have appeared in their true character, as "the lights of the world," and when the Church has reflected "the beauty of holiness." The fervent and united prayers of the faithful have proved an eminent means of calling down the blessing—while the abounding of the "Spirit of grace and supplication" is itself a peculiar fruit of divine favour. At two marked periods of the Church's history, earnest prayer was seen connected with the advent of Zion's light, and the manifestation upon her of the Divine glory. 1. At the *Apostolic era*; and 2. In the time of the *blessed Reformation*. Then, in an eminent sense, the servants of the Lord gave him no rest, and day or night kept not silence.—Eagerly did they seek for the blessing; and like the patriarch they wrestled with the Angel till they prevailed. While the members of the Church "continued in the Apostle's doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers," the standard-bearers in Zion gave themselves wholly to prayer and to the ministry of the word. The fervent petitions of the Apostle Paul, in the conclusion of his several epistles, strikingly illustrate the spirit of prayer, as it rested upon the primitive Church. The earnest pleadings of Luther and Farel and Knox, and their fellow-reformers, evince the firm faith and intense spiritual desires of the men whom God raised up for the vindication of his truth, and the revival of the Church. Our Covenanted confessors and martyrs were men of a like prayerful spirit; and in later times, such servants of God as Brainerd and Whitfield and M'Cheyne,

exemplified the maxim of the German Reformer, that “*to pray well is to study well,*” and to labour too, successfully. God is wont to honour His own ordinance; and when He pours out the Spirit of grace and supplication, not only has the departed glory returned to Zion, but the light come has been increased. Her “righteousness has gone forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth.” All bypast seasons of revival have had as a prominent characteristic abounding prayer—and divine predictions assure us that this shall be the peculiar glory of times of enlargement and blessing that are approaching.—“Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”—(Psalm ii. 8.) “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem! which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”—(Isaiah lxii. 6,7.) It concerns us deeply, as ministers and people, to excite and cherish this spirit of earnest and persevering prayer, as we would desire and expect the full manifestation of the coming glory. Our own duty is to “pray without ceasing”—to “pray always and not to faint”—The “Fellowship Meeting” should be maintained in vigour and efficiency. We should promote and encourage special “*Concerts for prayer.*” Throughout life, we should seek to realize what Fuller relates of Sutcliffe—and what he expresses as his own fervent desire. When drawing near his end, Sutcliffe repeatedly said—“I wish I had prayed more. Referring to this dying desire, Fuller adds—“In reviewing my own life, *I wish I had prayed more than I have for the success of the Gospel.* I have seen enough to furnish me with matters of thanksgiving; but had I prayed more I might have seen more. I wish I had prayed more *for the salvation of those about me,* and who are given me in charge I wish I had prayed more *for my own soul.* I might then have enjoyed much more communion with God. I wish I had prayed more *in all my undertaking:* I might then have had my steps more directed by God, and attended with fewer deviations from his will?”*

* Fuller's Funeral Sermon for Rev. J. Sutcliffe.

4. TRUE DEVOTEDNESS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHURCH'S SOLEMN COVENANT.

In the past history of the Church, times of Covenanting have been blessed seasons of revival, of prayer, and holy brotherhood, and of vigorous effort for the exhibition and diffusion of Scriptural principle. Thus it was in various periods of the history of the ancient Israelitish Church; and thus too especially in the memorable era of the British covenants. Engaging in these federal deeds manifested on the part of our illustrious ancestors a revived and devoted spirit; and the Covenants were approved instruments for promoting union in truth and love, and for exciting to holy and sustained exertions. The men, who, in times of peril, unfurled a covenanted standard, *yielded themselves to God*, as dedicated to his service, and voluntarily pledged to advance his glory throughout the nations. Thy "*first gave themselves to the Lord,*" and then unto his servants "*by the will of God.*"—(2 Cor. viii. 5.)

Impelled by a sense of sacred vows, our Scottish forefathers, in the memorable eras of Covenanting—in 1581 and 1596, in 1638 and 1648—achieved wonders. Successfully did they resist Popery, and overthrow the Papal dominion in their native country. They made head against Prelacy and arbitrary power, though sustained by all the favour and influence of monarchy. They planted the seed of the majestic oak of British liberty, which has spread its goodly boughs to the ends of the earth. Above all, to federal dedication we are mainly indebted for our admirable Doctrinal Standards—the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. Compiled by men who had previously devoted themselves to God, and who were firmly united to one another by the bond of the SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, the principles of these excellent Symbols have taken deep root, and have never since been eradicated from British theology. To this we owe, in a great measure, our preservation in these countries from the vain philosophy and infidel noology which have overspread other Protestant nations and Churches. The system of ecclesiastical order propounded in Covenanting times is, at present, the most extensive in Protestant Christendom—it is continually spread-

ing, and seems destined to be still farther diffused, with the conversion of Jew and Gentiles, throughout all nations. Not in doctrinal principle only, but in purity of worship too, and in the graces of a holy character, did the Covenants of our ancestors promote revival. As in primitive times, the multitude of believers were of "one heart and of one soul." The truth shone forth in living examples with attractive lustre, and achieved throughout the earth its glorious triumphs. Should we not earnestly seek that in our own day similar blessed effects may result from Covenant-dedication? Our Covenant, recently renewed, binds us to maintain inviolate a holy brotherhood, as it pledges us to active, sustained, and self-denying exertions for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. We have vowed to embody in our hearts and lives the light, and to reflect and diffuse it. It will be a sad and aggravated evil, if a season of Covenanting and eminent privilege is allowed to pass away unimproved. Our solemn vows loudly call upon us to arise and shine. To this invitation we should cheerfully respond, as men feeling that they are not their own, but wholly the Lord's—devoted to a glorious Master—continually gathering motives to renewed obedience from our federal engagement. "God is the Lord who has shown us light. Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. THOU ART MY GOD, AND I WILL PRAISE THEE ; THOU ART MY GOD, I WILL EXALT THEE." —(Psalm cxviii. 27, 29.)

We need only add two or three considerations to excite to present obedience—

1. *Recent mercies impose upon us as a Church, manifold and peculiar obligations.*

We enjoy external peace, and brotherly concord and love abound. Precious privileges are multiplied. Unexpected deliverances have been wrought for Zion. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—(Psalm cxxvi. 3.) A sense of gratitude should impel us to holy devotedness. The Lord's oft-repeated command—to awake, arise, shine—should constrain us, as denizens of Zion, to put on our "beautiful garments," and, ascending up to our high mountain, to herald salvation throughout the nations. Here will our sincerity in

vowing be tested. We will evidence, by our ready obedience or neglect, either that we swear "The Lord liveth" in truth, or that we dealt perfidiously in God's Covenant. Greatly should we deprecate a return to former apathy and lukewarmness. Acting under a sense of federal dedication, we shall "finish our testimony," and be prepared for our Lord's glorious appearance. As a Church, we should aim that our "last works" should be "more than the first."—(Rev. ii. 19.) Before the blessed times promised to Zion shall come, there must be strenuous and persevering effort, and the liberal consecration of worldly substance to the Lord. A wide diffusion of the light, and an humble, self-denied, and devoted spirit are indispensable; if the Church is to be established—the world evangelized—and the testimony of Christ triumphant.

2. For all this work *we have high encouragement.*

The present age, even amidst remaining darkness and trial, is bright with promise above all that have preceded it. Every movement in the Church—every event in providence—is beckoning to our great duty, and calling upon us to arise and shine. Zion's day of enlargement and gladness is breaking. Remote nations are thrown open for the dissemination of the truth. "The field is the world." "Oh! sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things; His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory"—(Psalm xcvi. 1.) The faithful pleadings of Covenanted witnesses have been heard, and are taking effect in different countries. God has raised up many to invite, encourage, and assist us in our efforts to spread the light of our testimony; and many more would assist if, as a people, we were seen thoroughly devoted to the Lord's work.—"He that is not against us is for us." Earnest and prayerful men are labouring in many quarters to overthrow error and oppression, and to establish the reign of peace and righteousness.

3. We are, finally, cheered and animated by the *certain prospect of our Lord's speedy coming.* Soon will He take Him His great power to reign. Soon will He overthrow Babylon; and girding His sword upon His thigh, ride forth conquering and to conquer. Every prayerful effort for advancing the honour of Christ will then be acknowledged and rewarded. Faithful witnesses

shall "rise and reign with Christ a thousand years."—(Rev. xx. 4.) "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." "The isles shall wait for His law." "The ends of the earth" shall see His salvation. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess it." "The Lord shall be King over all the earth." "His large and great dominion shall extend from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

CONCLUSION.

This subject—1. *Solemnly calls us to bless God for the light that has arisen upon the Church, and for the glory that has come upon her.*

We should ever regard this as the fruit of peculiar favour and as a very distinguished blessing. In sovereign mercy "the Day-spring from on high" has visited us, to give the knowledge of salvation through the remission of sins. Ours has been the special privilege of having the light imparted to our native land, without which we had still remained in the region and shadow of death. Many nations are yet involved in moral and spiritual darkness; and in some, to which Divine revelation was sent, the light has become obscure, and the gloom has become even thicker and more impenetrable. If we have been freed from this miserable condition, we should rejoice in the singular grace of God that has rescued us from "the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." With grateful hearts, we should bless God for the light of the Holy Scriptures—of salvation completed—and of the glorious Reformation. With the heart and life we should show forth "His praises, who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light."

2.—*Invites and urges all to receive and improve the risen light.*

The revelation of mercy—the blessed means of salvation—has been brought near to all who hear the Gospel. This high privilege entails the most solemn and weighty responsibility. How melancholy and oppressive the thought, that all this is to some only the ground of aggravated condemnation! Many

there are who love darkness rather than light, and who refuse to come to the light, lest their deeds, which are evil, should be reprov'd. The condition of such even now is sad and hopeless; and fearful beyond conception will be the final doom of those who, with the light of the Word shining around them, descend to "outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." Our first and immediate duty is to hail the discoveries of Divine revelation, and to "believe on the light, that we may be the children of light." We should apply our minds to the intimations of the Word, and receive the light sent, in our understandings and hearts. Frequently and earnestly should we pray—"Open mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law." Diligently should we employ all appointed means of spiritual illumination, and earnestly seek the Spirit—the unction from above—whereby we may understand all things. We are required to show the excellency of our profession in the purity, loveliness, and attractive graces of a holy character. The Church is set up as a "beacon" to men enveloped in darkness and exposed to imminent danger. Her living members are each one to walk as the light, that increases continually "till the perfect day."

The subject especially addresses COVENANTED WITNESSES, and demands from them prayerful consideration, and ready and unreserved obedience. We have professed more than others. Our privileges are valuable and abundant, and in recent days they have been largely increased. As the successors of devoted reformers and martyrs, we have been placed on holy ground, and to us there have been transmitted the precious deposit of truths that have been sealed with the blood of Christ's faithful servants. Ever should we listen to the solemn appeal—"What do ye more than others?" "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Our high profession loudly calls us to vigorous persevering exertions. Oh! let us not, in "a day of glad tidings," be inattentive to the voice from heaven, which equally directs in the way of important duty, and declares the inconceivable benefit of holy obedience.

“ Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The Lamp of Life deny ?”

3.—To you, Fathers and Brethren, is this message specially and solemnly addressed. We live in an age of wonders. Great events are at the door, and momentous changes are near at hand. There is a general expectation of some mighty movement speedily to occur, not unlike the desire of the nations as “the fulness of time” approached, and as the Saviour was about to become incarnate. To the diligent student of prophecy—to the faithful witness for Messiah’s royal prerogatives—there is much at present in the aspects of providence to solemnize the mind—there is much too to animate and encourage. As ministers in the sanctuary, and rulers in the house of God, we should aim to descry the light risen and the glory come, and we should herald its approach to others. As watchmen on the walls of Zion, our duty is to warn of danger and to announce deliverance. To inquirers it is ours to proclaim—“*The morning cometh.*” We should, like the prophet, betake ourselves to the place of observation, and living by faith, declare the resolution—“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch, to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer him when I am reprovèd.” “For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come it will not tarry.”—(Hab. ii. 1, 3.) While looking abroad to discern “the signs of the times,” we should, as the Apocalyptic living creatures, be “full of eyes within,”—equally observant of our own spirits and of the Church’s internal condition. In such an attitude, and with such a spirit, we may expect safety and comfort. “Light is sown for the righteous.” “Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.”

You are, moreover, specially required to *maintain and exhibit a holy character.* The “angels” of the Churches are represented as “stars” in the Redeemer’s right hand, themselves enlightened by nearness to the Sun of Righteousness, and set up to reflect His radiance. To ministers of the Word it was first declared—“*You are the light of the world;*” and on them it was specially enjoined

—“*Let your light shine before men.*” A holy character in a teacher of religion is as important an element of success as vigorous effort. Even Quintilian declares that “purity of life is indispensable to the Orator.” Nothing will compensate for the want of a high measure of personal piety in a minister. Here is the fountain-spring of all devoted exertion and of all eminent success. Here too is the secret of a minister’s support and consolation amidst manifold labours, anxieties, and trials. Consider, furthermore, that your work is to *stimulate and encourage the Church*. The angels of the Churches are to “strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die”—they are always to eschew lukewarmness and be zealous. The standard of spiritual feeling and action in the Church is most commonly the spirit and life of the pastor ; hence are ministers, in the book of Revelation, primarily addressed, both in words of encouragement and exhortation, of solemn warning and rebuke. It is beyond doubt, that the people will rejoice with you, when you proclaim “peace, and say unto Zion, thy God reigneth.” They will assuredly uphold your hands and second your efforts when they see you thoroughly in earnest. Thus will the Church become radiant with the lustre of truth. An *earnest* ministry will often stand connected with an *earnest and faithful* Church. Awaking at the call of faithful watchmen, “a willing people shall shine forth in the beauty of holiness,” and become the honoured instruments of spreading the light of salvation throughout the earth.

Finally, dear Fathers and Brethren, it should be yours *to cherish lofty views and noble aims, and to seek preparation for shining in glory with the Lord at His coming*. The position which you occupy—the testimony which you hold—the vows which you have uttered—the great work which you are called to perform—all should inspire you with resolute purpose and **holy boldness**. Living as in the immediate presence of the King—embarked in an enterprise the noblest and most important—that of setting up His kingdom in the earth, and looking for and hastening to His coming—you should be strong and very **courageous**. You should live above the world, and overcome it by faith. Yours is no doubtful enterprise, and the reward of

your labour is certain and glorious. The exalted Master whom you serve, and whose glory you are dedicated to advance, will shortly come to plead His own cause—to deliver His waiting servants, and to establish His kingdom in the earth. Meanwhile, we should ever hear and obey His directing, encouraging voice—“WORK, FOR I AM WITH YOU, SAITH THE LORD GOD.” Let us “attempt great things,” and joyfully “expect great things.” Be it ours to wait with prayerful expectation and desire for His glorious appearing. “Be diligent, to be found of Him without spot, and blameless.” He ere long will come to Zion—rescue her from mourning and oppression—put on her the garments of salvation—and fill the world with His glory. Should you not be permitted on earth to behold Zion’s full glory—to witness the downfall of Babylon, and the triumph of the testimony of Jesus—the glad tidings will be borne to you in glory, and will enhance the joys of the sanctuary above. When your work on earth is done, you will receive the blessed reward, in being welcomed to the joy of your Lord; and at His second coming, His powerful voice, opening your graves, shall call you to arise and shine with Him in glory. Oh! let our heart and eye be steadily fixed upon the crown; and always abounding in the work of the Lord, let us press to “the mark of the prize” of our holy vocation. “THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.”

NOTE.—*This Synodical Discourse was at first prepared and delivered from brief notes. A number of engrossing engagements, together with the labours of the Theological Hall, to which the author was unexpectedly called, retarded the rewriting of it for the press. This will account for the circumstance, that while the substance is the same, there is, in some parts, an alteration of phraseology.*