

most unwarrantable tendency to make the Bible the arena for almost every conflict. Is the justness of capital punishment to be defended, forthwith the champion marches to the Bible for his weapons, and he wields them with an air of triumph. Is its abolition sought, straightway to the Bible again go its pleaders, with no less confidence and triumph. Are the wars of nations to be defended or opposed, pairing off again in double sets may be seen the respective combatants, and the Bible is the battle-field. Is the abomination of human slavery—the right of man to possess his fellow man—in need of support and defence—or is an enlightened public sentiment incensed at the passage of a law for the capture of the fugitive from bondage—or is that law to be opposed and its repeal sought—or is slavery itself to be opposed, in moderate temper, or in the untamed rampant spirit of a Garrison or a Foster—to the Bible, again, march all the belligerents. The man of God, thoughtless of the influence he is exerting, is seen there. And the man, hardened in sin, from whose mouth may be heard “curses and oaths, and scripture phrase,” careless of any moral influence, may be seen there. Brethren this is not right. The Bible no more settles these questions than does it that of a national bank or a protective tariff. While there are hosts of spectators beholding the strife, how must they be induced to regard the Bible? Will they approach its pages and its sacred aphorisms as God speaking to them? No—surely no!

In all these ways is the spirit of Infidelity and of Anti-Christ now at work. And these are not all. But the present space forbids further details.

To meet, then, the exigencies of the times, we want in the field men of talent, piety, and means, to meet the hosts who oppose themselves to God and his truth—men who keep themselves informed on all the movements of the armies of the aliens. For we are in a time answering to that in which the ancient church was taken captive by “the mystery of iniquity.” “To your tents, O, Israel!” should be iterated from hill-top to hill-top throughout the land. It was never more true than now, that “one can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.”

It is not urged that all who shall be engaged in the public ministry of the word, must be thus prepared. This is not necessary.—It never will be necessary. But it is necessary, and doubtless will be for years, that a portion of the public laborers be of that class indicated by these necessities.

Let us then brethren come together in council* with enlightened and liberal minds, tempered by the spirit and love of the truth—consolidate the means and energies of the churches—cultivate and direct the talent and enterprise of the brotherhood—and call into exercise all the means and appliances, which our Heavenly father shall, in the riches of his goodness, commit to our trust. Thus laboring, copying after the “meekness and gentleness of Christ,” our Master, we will invoke his blessing and guidance, and commit our cause to the High and Holy One.

* “Come together in council?” Had our brethren a council in Troopsville?