

fact, I fear there is a growing disposition, on the part of christian churches, to hide or sacrifice their principles for sake of a fool's reward, POPULARITY, or to gain to their side the rich and influential, who, it is hoped, will contribute largely to the "schemes of the church."

There are many in the different christian churches of the present day, who, probably, have a very vague idea of the meaning of Christ, when he said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." They could not tell where they found any very narrow or difficult place. They know nothing of self-denial as connected with church membership. Attendance at the house of God, is, with them, more a matter of convenience or inclination than of duty. Christ's authority does not regulate them. But this is only one of the forms in which selfishness and love of ease are presented to our view. Comfort, bodily comfort, and personal gratification are the first and chief considerations with very many professing christians in the present day. In hundreds of churches throughout the United States, and in some of these Lower Provinces, nay, even in Scotland, this worship of self is so far above the worship of God, that they will not even trouble themselves to rise to their feet, or change their posture in any other way to honour and glorify, *even when they pretend to draw near to the Throne of Grace as suppliants.*

Probably they excuse themselves with the argument that "the posture in prayer is nothing." That "bodily exercise is of no account with God." Very likely they will even boast that they have got a step farther than other christians from the ways of popery. It is, however, the spirit of popery displaying itself in another form. Both are attempts to exalt self, by robbing God of that to which he is entitled. *Religion does not make man unnatural.* Now, it is certain that devotional attitudes cannot be viewed as mere arbitrary motions of the body. They are the promptings of the inner man. God requires nothing less than this, and no more. "Offer it now unto thy governor: will he be pleased with thee or accept it at thy hand." But all this self-

seeking, and trifling with holy things may be traced to that spirit which is abroad in the world under the abused name of "christian liberty," which has already grown so bold as to walk into the sanctuary of God, and there insult the Almighty to his face.

This brings me again to remark that the days in which we live are marked by what we designate rash speculation regarding both the doctrines and duties of the Word of God. Most churches, of any standing, have formularies or "confessions," in which they have set forth the views which they entertain on doctrinal subjects. These confessions are not held to be inspired.— They are only intended to declare to all men the sense in which we understand what God says to us in his word. But the rash and presumptuous, who have perhaps a feeling that they are capable of imparting new light on theological subjects, find fault with such formularies as, in their opinion, tending to check free enquiry. So soon as they find that their sentiments are at variance with the "standards" to which they subscribed, they attempt to undermine the authority of such formularies, and to plead for casting them aside altogether, or for having them revised. The pitiful spectacle which the "Church of England" has for years, presented in this respect is known to you all. But this is not the only church in which we find such loose and revolutionary sentiments. The "Church of Scotland" seems to follow in the wake of the Church of England. Every new and pet theory of the leading men in that church also, which cannot stand beside the "Confession of Faith," seems to suggest to its proud author the idea of either setting the Confession aside altogether, or, at least of having it greatly modified. That such a state of things exists, and that the best men in that church stand in dread of the consequences to the cause of religious truth, from the introduction of new opinions and practices, is abundantly apparent from the words of warning which they have used in rebuking such innovators. Would that I could stop with the church just referred to. But, Alas, I cannot! Those with whom