

I. COR. XVI. 13.

“WATCH YE, STAND FAST IN THE FAITH, QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE STRONG.”

Whoever has watched the Church of England for the last thirty years cannot fail to notice the great efforts that have been made to rescue her from the dulness and indifference into which she had fallen for more than a hundred years, to awaken her to a sense of her high mission in the evangelization of the world, and to the necessity of a stricter observance of her order and discipline. “Many practices have been revived of ancient usage, and many doctrines which slumbered or were held in abeyance, have started suddenly to a new life. The Divine appointment of our Clergy and their apostolical succession, daily prayer in the churches, weekly communion, more importance and prominence given to the prayers of the Church than to the sermons; a higher tone in regard to Baptism, not only as an outward rite, but as an inward, regenerating grace; a stricter and more continual application to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, not only as a spiritual memorial of Christ, but also as a positive channel of God’s grace in the Body and Blood of our Lord, ‘verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful;’ the catechizing of children in our churches; the practice of baptizing in the congregation; the celebration of Holy Matrimony in the church; the Confirmation day marked, as the Church intended, by the reception of the first communion; and altogether a more minute attendance to all the reverential forms and ceremonies commanded by the Church. These are some of the signs of a new life; much is thought of, spoken of, and done now, which, fifty years ago, would have been unintelligible.”

For these things many pious men have prayed and laboured and suffered reproach. And while some of them have been spared by God to see the fruits of their labours, others, gone to their rest, had they seen our day, would have rejoiced and been glad. And, my brethren, well would it be for us, I think, were we content with the simple revival and observance of the Church’s rites and ceremonies in greater decency and order. Well would it be for us were we content to follow the guidance and intention of those men who began this revival, by quietly maintaining and