

provided for by the Committee on Bills and Overtures—as to the whereabouts of the standing of Mr. Chiniquy. The Presbytery of Chatham couldn't tell; the Synod couldn't tell. So they thought they would wait till the General Assembly met to see if any of their neighbours could tell. Mr. Chiniquy addressed the Synod. He is always interesting. Many will be glad to hear that the twice-burnt book is in a fair way for resurrection. *Vive la pèrè Chiniquy!*

Next year the Synod will make a new departure by meeting on the last Monday of April instead of on the second Monday as usual. It is to be hoped this change, made largely on account of the weather, will make the visit of the delegates much more pleasant for the hosts and hostesses of Chatham as well as for themselves. We shall see. A. M. O. S.

### REVIVALS.

The following, upon a subject which is now attracting a great deal of attention, is from Dr. William M. Taylor's "Peter, the Apostle," (Harper Bros., New York), a book we would commend to Sabbath school workers in view of the course of Gospel lessons just entered upon. Referring to the ministry of John the Baptist, he says: We may learn that when Jesus is about to visit a community in His saving power, His coming is generally preceded by loud calls to repentance. It was the special mission of the Baptist to unfold the majesty of the divine law, and call men up to its unerring standard. Thereby they discovered how sinful they had become, and how helpless they were to regenerate themselves. Their attempts at reformation revealed to them their spiritual impotence, and made them ready to welcome that divine Redeemer, whose special gift was the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The law went before the Gospel; for the knowledge of sin must precede the appreciation of salvation; and as it was in the case of the two dispensations, so is it yet in those instances of genuine revival which at intervals have come to nations or to neighbourhoods.

In some form or other John the Baptist comes always to forebode Christ. Now he takes the form of a Luther, a Latimer, or a Knox, and with scathing eloquence, or plain blunt sense or dauntless courage, he exposes prevalent evils both in Church and State, until men's hearts fail them for fear, and they cry: "What must we do to be saved?" Again, he comes in no human shape, but takes the form of some terrible calamity—a money panic, like that which swept over this city in 1857; an epidemic of cholera or yellow fever or some destructive dispensation of Providence, that throws men out of themselves, and sets them all uncovered and open before the eyes of Him with whom they have to do. I may misread greatly the signs of the times, yet I think I recognize John the Baptist among us now. We cannot take up a respectable newspaper without reading in it some call to repentance. The demand it makes is for honesty, for truth, for righteousness. Its most pungent political articles read like so many variations of John's sermons to the soldiers, to the tax-gatherers, and to the Scribes and Pharisees. Nay, even the political orator is calling upon the occupants of our pulpits to speak plainly to their fellow-men about the duties of every day, that they may become the conservators of the Republic. What does it all mean? It surely means that John the Baptist is abroad, and that he is anew the herald of a coming Christian revival. Let it go on then, for this cry for reformation is an aspiration inspired by God Himself, and is the assurance that regeneration is at hand.

We may learn, in the second place, that when Jesus comes to a place in saving power, His presence is recognized by the descent of the Holy Spirit. John knew that Jesus was the coming deliverer when he saw the Holy Ghost like a dove coming down upon Him, and remaining with Him. Nor was this all. The Saviour Himself was, so far, at least, as His human nature was concerned, prepared for His ministry of service and of sacrifice by the reception of the Spirit. As Neander says: "The quiet flight and the resting dove betokened no sudden seizure of the Spirit, but a uniform unfolding of the life of God; the loftiness, yet the calm repose, of a nature itself divine; the indwelling of the Spirit, so that he could impart it to others, and fill them completely with it, not as a prophet merely, but as a Creator."

Now, as the descent of the Spirit upon the body of Christ was the token that He was the Messiah, so the

sight of His body, the Church, revived by the power and effusion of the Spirit, will be the sign to the world that its wished-for regeneration is to come through its instrumentality. Revival in the Church must precede the regeneration of the world. Men are crying out for a return to uprightness and truth; but they will not acknowledge that this is to be effected through the Church until they behold a revival of these same qualities in professedly Christian people. That which is needed to leaven the nation is not the pseudo principle, which is, alas, too common in the Church, but the real Spirit of Christ living and working in the believer.

I think it would be easy to make it appear that at all times when scepticism has been rampant and morality low outside the Church, there has been little else than a cold, negative orthodoxy within the Church itself. It was so in England just before the Wesleys came forth preaching repentance; and if to-day there is a revival of scepticism, and an increase of iniquity, one cause may be found in the Pharisaism and formality that are so prevalent among those who "profess and call themselves Christians." So if we wish a blessing for the nation, we must cry for a fresh descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Church. Oh, for that baptism of fire, which shall impart to our hearts its own flaming energy, and consume within them every particle of sinful chaff, while it consecrates all their powers to the service of the Lord! Let the Church rise to its highest tidal mark in purity, in prayer, in self-sacrifice and in devotion, and the blessing will overflow the nation too.

When revival is mentioned we who believe ourselves Christians are too apt to think of others, and to look for the appearance of quickening in them. But that is beginning at the wrong end. When Christ Himself went forth to His ministry of salvation, the first thing he did was to open His soul for the reception of the descending Spirit. Pentecost began by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the disciples in the upper room; and if we are to have a revival now, it will come only when you, and I, and all the members of our Churches are willing to be ourselves revived by the acceptance of this burning baptism. Ay, this burning baptism, for it burns wherever it purifies; it brings a discipline as well as imparts an energy; and he who would possess its power must submit himself to its scorching flame. Are you willing, my brother? That is the question which for you lies at the root of all revival.

If we are to have revival, this is what our ministers must preach ("Behold the Lamb") and this is what our people must believe; for the secret of evangelical success is not so much in the qualities of the preacher as in the matter which he preaches. Doubtless Luther was a great man. Yet in his day there were other men as largely dowered with intellectual gifts as he; but none of them performed the work he did, because none of them preached the sacrificial character of the death of Christ as he proclaimed it. Read his "Lectures on the Galatians," and you will find that he sets forth the doctrine of Christ's substitution in the most objective form; and iterates and reiterates the truth, that "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Glance over the sermons of Whitfield and the Wesleys, and you will be struck with the fact that they also insisted on the sacrificial character of the death of Christ. The same thing is seen in all the discourses of Mr. Spurgeon, still more recently in the addresses of Mr. Moody. And is not an induction of particulars like these warrant enough for the inference that in this particular presentation of the cross of Christ lies the secret of its power? It was when Andrew and John heard of Jesus as the Lamb of Sacrifice that they followed Him to His abode, and whenever this aspect of Christ's death is fairly and fully set before men, multitudes yet will be stimulated to become His disciples.

That was a strange confession which an influential Unitarian layman made a few months ago in Liverpool, when, at a meeting of the Domestic Mission of the Church to which he belonged, he said "that though he had little sympathy with the methods they adopted, disliked the bad taste which they evinced, and could not at all agree with the doctrines which they preached, yet he felt bound to confess that Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey had in one short month effected more among the masses of that town, in the way of reclaiming drunkards and reforming prodigals

than he and those who laboured with him had accomplished in all the years during which they had been at work." Alas! He did not see that the secret of the power of these men was their preaching of Christ and Him crucified, in that very sense which he and those who acted with him had repudiated the doctrine. Let us be assured, therefore, that if we wish revival we must obtain it, not by the ventilation of novelties in religion, but by the rebrighting of the old truth that "Jesus died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

### THAT JOINT COMMITTEE.

MR. EDITOR,—On the proposed union of Methodism and Presbyterianism in certain departments of Home Mission work, whereby Presbyterians in outlying districts, just as good as the average people in any of our congregations, shall be left to be cared for by the Methodist Church—our own Church deliberately making up her mind not to make spiritual provision for them—I have still a few words to say.

Surely it will not be denied that those who have been baptized in our own Church, and accepted as communicants therein, have a claim upon the Church's care. Has the Church not thereby entered into a solemn covenant to take as faithful spiritual care of them as of the very choicest members of our city congregations? I maintain that she has, and that it is the duty of the Presbyterian Church to send them the Gospel, as taught in our standards, as much as it is her duty to send the Gospel to the heathen, unless it be maintained that our own people have less claim upon us than the heathen have. The Church of Christ does not determine success in Foreign Mission work by numbers. If only one convert every ten years were secured by all the denominations combined her duty to the heathen would remain just as binding as ever, and that duty would require her to work as earnestly as she does now. Then why should the smallness of the numbers, or the poverty of the harvest to be reaped in certain Home Mission districts, prevent our Church from trying to supply them with the means of grace?

"We want to economize our resources," it is said. Rubbish! Your very resources would dry up were it not for the fact that the poverty and spiritual destitution of such fields as you intend to abandon keep the fountains of liberality ever flowing. Turn away from these fields, and instead of having more resources you will have less. The very weakness of these outlying places appeals to the sympathy of the people and increases their liberality. Hand over the weakest stations to other bodies, and our appeal for funds will at once be shorn of its strength, and we shall lose the advantages hoped for from this new movement, while retaining all its disadvantages. Does not experience show that mission funds are contributed not in bulk from year to year, like a regular income, so that you may appropriate them as you please, but varying according to the actual needs of the case? Diminish the apparent need by transference of the weakest fields to another body and you necessarily diminish the funds.

Besides, the economy argument sounds somewhat strange with regard to almost the only Scheme of the Church which can boast a respectable balance at the end of the year. If it were applied to some of the other Schemes that fail to make ends meet it would be much more convincing as an argument.

Further, it is natural to expect that if this union takes place our people will begin to catch the new latitudinarian spirit and say: "If Methodists can attend to our weakest stations better than our own Church can, we see no reason why we should pay large sums to support colleges for the training of Presbyterian ministers, during a course of six or seven years, when Methodist ministers can do the work better, and be trained for the work in less time and at much less expense. The Church has already acknowledged that Arminianism is as good as Calvinism, by handing over her weakest children to the care of Arminianism and the true mother always loves her weakest children the best—and as Arminianism costs less than the other we see no necessity to pay for the dearer article. The Church adopted this principle to save money and we adopt it for the same reason. Henceforth we give nothing to Presbyterian colleges." If in the future they act on this principle they will only have learned the lesson which the Church is now preparing to teach them.