

practical interest has been awakened in many minds in the forward movement that has been proposed. Many churches and communities have apparently been stirred, and even revolutionized. Intense longing for a great religious awakening and confident expectation of it have been felt in many quarters.

But notwithstanding all this, the great mass of ministers and members are still apparently unmoved. A prominent metropolitan preacher is represented by the daily press as having lately said in substance :

"There is no general religious movement in this city. The ministry and the people are not trembling with anxiety or excitement; they are not even roused to think seriously on the subject. The average Christian does not even know that anything has been accomplished or even attempted, and does not care to know."

The same thing is probably true, even since Mr. F. B. Meyer has come and gone. A few Christians—largely of the deadhead class, it has been suggested—have had a good time, and gone their way. A few churches have shaken off the long-continued lethargy, and roused themselves to fruitful spiritual efforts. Some of the small communities have been greatly refreshed, but the vast majority are still in the same slough of indifference.

We call attention to Secretary Payne's article in this number of *THE HOMILETIC REVIEW*—entitled, "The Coming Revival—How to Secure It"—as making some suggestions regarding what is needed to meet the present exigency. But we wish also to specify from our own point of view some of the obstacles in the way of the movement that must come before progress and uplift shall be possible.

#### SOME HINDRANCES IN THE WAY.

1st. The Bible has been largely discredited in the popular mind by the teaching in some of the pulpits and in some of the seminaries.

Some of the men who have been set for the instruction of the people in the

Word of God, and for the proclamation of the Gospel of salvation, seem to have entirely lost sight of and forgotten their real mission. They have presented nothing that is really new—nothing that was not presented as vigorously a century or even centuries ago in the name of infidelity—but through their connections with the press they have been able to spread their views very widely, and to create an atmosphere of doubt that has led great numbers to conclude that the old foundations had been entirely removed, and so we have had the humiliating—tho, from another point of view, exceedingly cheering—spectacle of the secular papers defending religion against the leading pulpits and the voluble professors! With such a state of things it would be folly for us to expect any great religious awakening and uplift; for in all such awakenings God honors His Word, and insists upon man's honoring it as the principal instrument, "the Sword of the Spirit." In playing with the Bible as curious literature men have forgotten that it is *the word of life*.

It is well to remember, however, that the same state of things existed before the great awakening under the Wesleys and Whitefield in the eighteenth century, and at the opening of the present century, when President Dwight found Yale College given over to skepticism, and when the country was flooded with French infidelity, and also in the years preceding the great later awakening of 1858. God is able to rebuke, and to restrain, and to vindicate His own Word, and will doubtless do it again as He has done it in the past.

2d. Decay of faith in God and the Supernatural, especially in the Holy Spirit as the Agent in Regeneration and Conversion, and in Prayer as the instrument of faith in securing the blessings of salvation.

This is the natural result of the ex-