

hopeful subjects of mere physical influence as others, and yet, as communities, they have no part in this movement; and when individuals in these connexions are brought to feel its power, they invariably turn to the way of truth, from which, in some cases, no amount of persecution can drive them. That God does lay under contribution the laws of our constitution is no doubt true; that He makes instrumental in promoting His purposes of grace as well as of providence even physical conditions of being we firmly believe; but, apart from a Divine power, these utterly fail to account for such facts as the above.

Second. In respect to what is bodily, and therefore visible, in the movement, it occurs to me that by far too much importance has been generally attached to the *outward*, to the overlooking of the *inward*. That God may have had a special design in making in some cases His work *visible*, is highly reasonable. The bulk of the world was fast losing all faith in Christianity, and preaching and praying were often rather to perform a duty, and fill up a form, than because we had any real confidence in their power. Millions were rushing to ruin, laughing at everything serious, and most of all, at professors of religion who neither practised its precepts nor had faith in its truths. Now, as "tongues were for a sign to them who believed not," it is not impossible that so have the visible effects of this work been designed to serve some special object in respect of the world's unbelief. Nor have they been in vain. The world has been struck with awe, and made teachable; unbelief has given way; a thirst for the Word and a spirit of enquiry have been excited, and much has been done to deepen religion on the public mind. More over perhaps, we are not correct in supposing that the work of the Spirit will generally be silent and undemonstrative. If we exclude bodily effects from the work of the Spirit, we cannot understand much that the Bible says of experimental religion. Weeping, crying, groaning, roaring, are bodily acts, and it is said of the repentance of Israel, when a "spirit of grace and supplication" is poured out, "they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Now, a parent's mourning for an only son and a first-born is not generally so quiet and undemonstrative a thing. Still, admitting both of these views, I think there has been a disposition to make far too much of cases of prostration, and an over-anxious desire manifested to have them largely taking place at Revival meetings; so much so, that disappointment has not only been felt if the meeting passed off quietly, and a feeling prevailed that no good had been done, but very absurd and foolish attempts have been common in some quarters to force persons into a state of prostration.—We have had less of this evil here than perhaps in many other localities, as the Presbyterian Ministers with whom I have had the pleasure of co-operating have displayed a wisdom and a firmness in conducting the movement beyond all praise; but to my knowledge, in many places, and especially under the direction of the lay element, things have been practised and things have been said, as if to compel the Spirit to operate and to overcome His reluctance, and to produce cases of prostration, that have gone far to prejudice the minds of good men against the whole movement, while cases of bodily weakness and nervous derangement have been paraded as examples of the Spirit's work. My own experience leads me to think that neither can we conclude all cases of bodily impression to be certain conversions, nor have we ground to believe that they form anything but a small fraction of those made to feel the power of Divine truth. I have seen and

examined persons who had been prostrated, and I could not by the greatest stretch of charity conclude that they had been even savingly convinced. Yet I would not say that even in their cases no good had been done. God may call some, with whom it is necessary to begin at a point not so far advanced as conviction. He may begin by first making them teachable, and may lead them by that means to get such a knowledge of original and actual sin as may be necessary to conviction. Still every one should be made clearly to apprehend that he should be looking principally for the inward change, and, without the evidence of that, place no value on bodily impressions. Besides I have known many, since the awakening began, who had no bodily impressions, to suffer greater distress of conscience for sin, and to pass through more awful and protracted convictions, than those who have been prostrated. Alarm and distress of conscience for sin, especially for the sin of unbelief and formality in religion, are very general, and the cases in which persons have been savingly brought to repentance and the blood of Christ without any visible impression have been far more numerous, than those where these have been present, while to almost all believers the movement has come with wonderful power to quicken their grace into fresh activity and zeal.

Third. Great practical wisdom and caution are necessary to guide the movement aright, and prevent extravagances and mistakes, by which the subtlety of Satan and the weakness of man have in some measure already marred the beauty of the work. I have already noticed some things to be avoided, and can now only indicate a few more against which we ought to be on our guard. 1st. The anxiety for converts to address meetings, under a kind of impression that they are in some sort *spiritual mediums*, through whom the Holy Spirit is said to be conveyed, and the setting up to instruct large assemblies, persons who would need themselves to be taught "what be the first principles of the oracles of God." If young persons of this class be called forward, let them be strictly confined to an account of what God has done in them and for them, without attempting to teach, when they neither know "what they speak nor whereof they affirm." Nor can it be wise to employ in conducting prayer at large meetings persons who, from ignorance and inexperience, may render the service contemptible to others.—2nd. The practice on the part of some of setting down as *de facto* conversions all cases of bodily impression, without teaching the necessity there is "for every man to prove his own work." Many are in danger of falling into delusion here, by taking it for granted that their conversion is certain, while perhaps their life is very little changed. And this leads to another evil, viz., the undervaluing of anything merely mental, if prostration has not taken place, producing an unhealthy longing for prostration, and an overweening satisfaction with themselves when it has taken place, very much calculated to foster spiritual pride. A tendency also is manifested by many to rest satisfied that they are pardoned and saved, simply because of what has taken place, without faith, apprehending Christ in some offer or promise of the Gospel; in fact, a disposition to live by feeling rather than by faith. 3d. A disposition on the part of some to imagine that they have got spiritual illumination, either in respect to truth or duty, apart from the Scriptures, as if miraculous inspiration was a thing of our day. No doubt some who have been of late brought to God have been remarkably enlarged for a time; but it has not been by way of supernatural revelation, but by their being enabled to apply and more freely express what they previously knew of Scripture

truth. I never knew a case where the convert could go beyond his previous knowledge. Perhaps it is scarcely necessary in connexion with this to notice the absurd stories of persons being gifted with different kinds of prophetic power, of some who have had visions, seen sights, *et hoc genus omne*, any further than just to impress this most important caution, that there never was a time when the minds of men were more open to receive ideas, and that there is great danger of error being mixed up with the truth, and the whole creceived with unquestioning credulity. Every approach to error or superstition should be promptly and firmly repressed, and every available opportunity employed thoroughly to leaven the public mind with evangelical sentiments. 4th. Much caution, too, is needed to avoid unreasonable and long-protracted meetings, that in many cases sadly interfere with other duties, especially the duties of the family. Unnecessary assembling of young and excitable persons, and unseemly extravagances under the name of spiritual exercises—children and servants breaking away from all proper restraint, and unfitting themselves for the ordinary duties of life, by keeping themselves in a state of continual and unnatural excitement—these, and such things as these, require wise and prompt remedies to be applied wherever they prevail. It is in no spirit of censoriousness I refer to these things, but rather that, by having such things removed, "our good may not be evil spoken of." Such things have not only furnished a handle to enemies, but have been a stumbling-block even to many good men, so that they feel less freedom in connecting themselves with a movement which I hope will prove, by its fruits, that it has really been of God."

In the meantime the movement advances in Ireland spreading from town to town and from one district to another.

In Scotland too and in Wales the work has commenced, and hundreds have experienced its effects. While we read the accounts of these movements let us rejoice and praise God. The revival may not have extended to us. But it has blessed our brethren in other lands. Now the church is one. The field is the world. The interest is the same everywhere, and if any one portion of the field has been visited with showers of blessing, let us rejoice and bless the name of God. Let us also be encouraged to plead with God for the influences of the Spirit. What He is doing elsewhere He can do here. His arm is not shortened.—His ear is not heavy. With Him is the residue of the Spirit. Let us plead with Him that He would come to us and bless us, and cause His work and power to appear unto His servants.

DAY OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

We rejoice to find that a day of public thanksgiving has been appointed by the Government of the country. The day appointed is the third of November. There has rarely been an occasion when we have been, in the course of providence, more loudly called upon to recognise the gracious hand of God, and give thanks to him for his abundant goodness. The season has been peculiar; the alternations of weather have been frequent; fear and hopes have held alternate sway in the breasts of the community. But in the end