

their people, then there would be no need for other outside organizations, which are at present doing much good in the world and fulfilling a high and holy mission.

Young Men's Christian Associations, Christian Conventions, City Mission Societies, Colportage Societies and such like, are a most hopeful and promising protest against the old dead ecclesiasticism that has prevailed too widely and too long. They furnish outlets for the generous energies of laymen who thus prove their willingness and their ability to render valuable service to the great cause of the Redeemer. They pave the way for a more general working of the whole people for Christ. We venture to assert that at this moment there are three times as many active christians in proportion to the number of professed christians, as there were fifty years ago; and the proportion is daily increasing. We are going round the circle towards the Apostolic system, which has been so lamentably forgotten and forsaken. Eighteen centuries ago the christian Church was very small in regards numbers, but nearly all its members were sincere in faith, earnest in work, and not to be appalled by all the terror of fiery persecution: May we not hope that before the end of this century, the Church now numbering its millions shall return, with this mighty accession of outward strength, to the fervour of its first love, the warmth of early zeal, the purity of primitive motive and the earnest simplicity of primitive faith?

The distinction between "clergy" and "laity" has no foundation in God's word. All the people are the *cleros*, the heritage, of God. Office-bearers indeed are bound to take the front rank in the battle of the Lord. If there is hard and perilous work to be done let them do it. Let them by all means *lead*, but let them not present the melancholy appearance of all being leaders with a scant muster roll of heartless followers or companions in their day of conflict. It is when we thus work together in the same spirit—ministers, elders, men and women, old men and young men, Sabbath school teachers and children,—that real progress can be made.

The truth is, that the very existence of evangelical religion is at present at stake. Its assailants are numerous, powerful and of consummate skill. Romanism, ritualism, infidelity, greed of gain, worldliness, the wild mania for speculation, the heathenism that rears its head in ominous blackness of darkness in all the great centres of population,—all these deadly enemies must be confronted and overcome by us or else we shall be overcome of them! Is not the battle worthy of all the energies of all the Lord's people? Most assuredly it is so.

A LESSON FROM THE LIFE OF JONATHAN EDWARDS.

JONATHAN EDWARDS was one of the greatest men, if not the greatest man, that America has yet produced. His piety was most profound; his learning most extensive; his faithfulness as a preacher and a pastor could not be questioned; and his success in the work of the gospel was all that the most hallowed ambition could expect. He was a prince and a leader in the Churches. His works are still read by theologians and metaphysicians in all parts of the world, while some of them are to be found in almost every Sabbath school and family library. The man that achieved a popularity so wide-spread and so lasting must have been remarkable at once for genius, industry, scholarship and genuine piety.—It seems astonishing that the same mind could produce the "Life of Brainerd," the "Religious Affections," and the essay on the "Will;" but so it was.

There is one incident in the history of this great and good man, which is instructive as a warning to congregations in the treatment of their ministers, and also as an illustration of the weak points in the Congregational system of Church government.

EDWARDS was a Congregationalist, and was for upwards of twenty years pastor of the Church at Northampton, Massachusetts. His labours were crowned with uncommon success. For many years he lived most happily in the love and esteem of the congregation. So much were they attached to him that they would have plucked out their