

law was intended to hold in the Kingdom of Christ. When God called Abraham, it was on the understood principle that the God of Abraham should be the God of his children and of his children's children to thousands of generations. When God enters a family it is with the desire to continue in that family to all generations, unless he is driven out. "Believe on the Lord Jesus," said Paul to the jailor, "and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house.*" The salvation that came to the parents was meant to be the heritage of their children and of their children's children, unless they put it off from them. Why is it, then, that this law, the law of development in Christ's kingdom, seems, to some extent, to be suspended in our Christian Churches in Canada, as indeed to some extent in the older churches and countries? What is the reason why the hearts of the children are not turned to the fathers, the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to the extent that the growth of our Protestant Churches should keep at least equal pace with the growth of our nominally Christian population?

On such a difficult point it is hazardous to speak with any measure of authority. The causes at work to keep the young from Christ, and from a public profession of his name, are of different kinds among different classes, in different countries, and at different stages of youthful life. All everywhere are kept from Christ, without doubt, by an inborn dislike of our fallen nature to Christ's humiliating doctrines and Christ's self-denying laws. But along with this chief cause, always present in the human heart, since Adam hid himself from God amid the trees of the garden, there are co-causes, as they may be called, that vary with time and circumstances, causes that work under this chief cause and as auxiliaries to it.

One great stumbling-block in the way of the young in our day, and in Anglo-Saxon communities, is the lukewarm-

ness of parents in regard to religious truth and religious ordinances as compared with the enthusiasm with which they follow wealth, fashion, pleasure, and politics. There was a time in the history of our Puritan and Covenanting forefathers when religion (that is the things of God, of the soul, of eternity,) was believed to be the chief end of man, while other things were only things by the way. There was a time when our fathers, moving onwards in the ways of God, dealt with the pleasures and profits of this life as our soldiers, on one occasion in the Crimea, who, in a burning sun, while passing under clusters of grapes in the Russian vineyards, plucked them and enjoyed them as they passed, but slackened not one iota in their march on the Russian guns. But we have lost much of this intense religiousness.

"This is an age," Spurgeon says in his recent College address, given in our last number, "of millinery and dolls and comedy. Even good people do not believe as their fathers used to do. Some even among Nonconformists are shamefully lax in their convictions; they have few masterly convictions such as would lead them to the stake, or even to imprisonment. Molluscs have taken the place of men, and men have turned to jelly-fishes." There is a dash of exaggeration about the words of this emphatic Baptist, but there is, we fear, a dash of truth. Amid much that is good and glorious in our age there is, except in places visited by these recent religious awakenings, a great deal of the very thing Spurgeon describes in his own vigorous way. On our shoulders our religion hangs like our summer clothing, a thing we would never think of going without, because it would not be seenly, but not quite such a felt and crying necessity, in our foolish judgment, as clothing is to men in winter, when it is the main thing that lies between them and freezing to death. This being the spirit of our age, need we wonder that