

STATE OF RELIGION.

No session of the Synod of 1865 was more useful or impressive than that which was devoted to hearing reports of the state of Religion throughout the bounds of the church. An evening will undoubtedly be devoted to the same object during the approaching meeting in St. John. It would be well for ministers to think before they leave home of what they are able through the grace of God to report. How many of our congregations have been refreshed with special revivals of religion? What additions have been made to the churches? What symptoms of life and devotion are apparent—what grounds of thankfulness for the past and of hope for the future? It is equally proper to indicate the places where spiritual deadness obtains, where there has been little or no progress, where the people are “neither cold nor hot,” or like the accursed fig-tree wearing the leaves of promise, lacking the fruits of grace.

REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

The evangelical churches of the United States have been widely blessed with a revival of religion, a most refreshing shower of spiritual influence. Many thousands have been added to the church. The students of most of the churches have manifested deep interest in the salvation of their own souls and the souls of others. We read of some congregations which received an addition of two hundred converts. There has been no movement so wide-spread and so general since 1857. North and South, East and West, rural districts and city churches are all partakers of the benefit.

We rejoice with our neighbors, and praise God that He is visiting them in mercy. The churches of the United States have been severely tried within the last few years. The sound of war often drowned the still small voice of the gospel. Ministers of religion not seldom forgot their vocation in the whirl of political agitation. The “one thing needful” did not receive that prominence which is ever its due. It is a most blessed dispensation of God’s grace to visit His heritage now that it is

wearied, to heal the ravage of war, and cause His people to rejoice in witnessing the triumphs of the King of kings.

While we are thankful for the mercy of our Lord vouchsafed to other churches, let us earnestly plead on behalf of our own church that the SPIRIT may accompany the word as preached by our ministers, and that saints may be revived and edified and sinners converted. God has not forgotten us. We have much to be thankful for.—We learn of numerous hopeful additions to several of our congregations. Still there is not a general movement towards the Lord, and ministers and others have to cry, “My leanness, my leanness!”

Thousands of sermons will be preached this summer to hundreds and thousands of hearers. God alone can make the word profitable. O that ministers and people would plead earnestly for a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord!

“O with thy tender mercies Lord,
Us early satisfy;
So we rejoice shall all our days,
And still be glad in thee,
According as the days have been
Wherein we grief have had,
And years wherein we ill have seen
So do thou make us glad.”

CHURCH LOYALTY.

Do we all feel a sufficiently keen interest in our own church? This is a question that deserves to be considered especially at this season of the year, before we meet in Synod and pass in review our twelve months’ work and progress.

1. The congregation with which each is connected should be to him nearer and dearer than any other. A “family” feeling is lawful and becoming between those who see each others faces every Lord’s day, who unite in singing God’s praises, in celebrating His goodness and imploring His mercy. Nothing is more beautiful than the sight of a congregation one in heart and mind, deeply attached to their minister, to their elders and to one another, ready to help the weak and poor, willing to overlook faults, to forgive offences, willing to spend and be spent in the good