

true revivals there have been exultable people who having no root withered as soon as the sun grew hot : but this is not the law of growth in Christ's spiritual body. The revived strength of youth does not give place to the fullness of infancy, but grows into the fuller vigour of manhood, and that vigour into the glory of mature life. So in the history of the church we see that each new visitation of the Spirit of God has advanced it a step towards its full stature in Christ.

"It is a mistake," says the same Magazine, "to suppose that religious revivals are transient in their influence, and that in the alleged "re-actions" which follow them the deeper religious earnestness which they originated is succeeded by a deeper religious indifference. All the great movements of which I have spoken left a permanent impression on the moral and religious condition of Christendom. The revelation of the power of the Holy Ghost in the twelfth century not only created the Waldensian churches, and prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation ; it regenerated monasticism, and effected a genuine and substantial improvement in the morality of Europe. The religious revival of the sixteenth century, which we call the Protestant Reformation, gave birth to the Protestantism of the Teutonic races, saved western Christendom from the growing corruptions of the Papacy, and for a time gave new energy to the noblest elements of life in the Papacy itself. Whitefield and Wesley did very much more than give a temporary impulse to the religious earnestness of England and America. As the result of the evangelical revival, an evangelical theology gradually took the place of the cold and unspiritual latitudinarianism which had paralyzed the religious power of the Church of England ; the Nonconformist Churches, which had sunk into a condition of great weakness, were inspired with new life and vigour, and out of the same movement sprang the great Methodist communion on both sides of the Atlantic.

Nor is it true that revivals which have had a narrower area, if they were real manifestations of the Divine power, have been transient in their effects, or have been followed by any depression of spiritual earnestness. Thirty years ago, in Scotland, the preaching of McCheyne, of Burns, of Milne, and of the Bonars, was accompanied by most remarkable revelations of the presence of God, and thousands of persons found rest and life in Christ. The excitement was intense for a time, but there is no reason to believe that the churches which it affected suffered any harm.

The sun and the showers that revive the fields and crown the year with bounteous harvest belong to God : the ploughing and sowing belong to the husbandman. It is not ours to control, save by humble importunate prayer, the laws that govern the spiritual seasons ; it is ours, however, to carry on with increasing diligence the spiritual husbandry, believing that the harvest is sure, though the hand that sows is not always the hand that reaps. The law that governs the spiritual harvests is in many respects similar to the law that governs the harvest of the earth. This law applicable to the temporal and the spiritual is stated by the prophet Hosea (ii. 21) in terms that meet at every stage the shallow objections of materialists and the worse objections of our own unbelieving hearts. "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the *heavens* and they shall hear the *earth*, and the earth shall hear the *corn* and the *wine* and the *oil* and they shall hear *Jezreel*," i. e., the church of God. The fountain of blessing for our fields and our souls lie up far above our sphere of things and beyond our rude instruments of investigation in the *heavens*, but the power that regulates the flow of the fountain is placed most graciously, on this earth and in the hand of Jezreel. Jezreel by industry speaks to the corn and wine and oil for God, and by prayer speaks to God for the corn, and thus a wheel is touched that touches others till the ear of God is reached and till the promised blessing comes down. Let us not forget then that the weight of the harvest is in proportion to the faith of our praying, the depth of our ploughing, and the breadth of our sowing.

What are the chief features of good spiritual husbandry? The husbandry that can look with hope to the heavy harvest?

1. It is the church's duty to draw nearer to God and by such seasons, as the night wrestling at the fords of Jabok to obtain *power with God and with*