

after, and not in a few instances outstrips the worldliness in the race. Side by side with the growth of wealth there is an alarmingly increased devotion to all that ministers to self-importance and self-pleasing. In the sudden rise to the possession of riches, there is often gross ignorance, not only of general information, for that does not concern us so much here, but of God's word and of all that which, by the blessing of God, tends to purify the life. This it is that makes the possession of wealth ten-fold more dangerous than it otherwise would be. There is an all-absorbing haste to be rich, because of the social position which riches seem to give; and the natural consequence is that the pride of wealth opposes itself in the haughtiest manner to the reception of the truth. Men grow up in the church and come into it from without, and demand that even there their vanity shall be ministered to, that the public expositions of truth shall be softened down to suit their taste. The thunders of the law must not be preached on any account—that sort of preaching is altogether behind our age. In such circumstances, with such men and women as parents, and in such surroundings as cities and towns furnish, it is inevitable that the young will be led to walk in ways that are utterly and irreconcilably opposed to the purity and self-denial which the adoption of Christ's yoke demands. Children of professedly Christian parents are known to be among the most licentious and pleasure-loving of those that frequent the haunts of vice. How could it be otherwise? There was no restraint put on the lusts of the flesh, and hence there could be no other result. In such circumstances the pastors of God's heritage are expected to stand by and look on in silence; and when the victims of sin reach an early grave, these same pastors must needs sing a requiem over the remains.

RESTIVENESS.

Then there is a *restiveness* which is none less manifest under the restraints which the laws of the Church impose. Here, the wealthy and the fashionable and the pleasure-loving are not alone referred; it is manifest in many that are outwardly pure, and even that are pious as well. The denunciations that the son of Zacharias hurled with such tremendous power at the Pharisees and others of his day are as boldly borne in these days as they were then. There is a growth of intelligence in our times, at least every writer in book, magazine and newspaper says so, but it is to be feared that the growth is not always, is too seldom, in the direction of an increased acquaintance either with the doctrines of divine grace in general, or those which distinctively belong to our own Church in

particular. Whether it be because of our affected liberality of sentiment which appears to be as shortsighted as it is spurious, or whatever be the cause, it is undeniably the fact that a knowledge of our own forms and principles is not on the increase, or at least has not been up to a very recent period. Here there is impatience with the restraints of our law and practice, an impatience which arises partly from the natural pride of heart, and greatly from an ignorance of the reasonableness and Scripture authority of our laws. Not, perhaps, to all sections of the church are these words applicable, they certainly are to some. The freedom and faithfulness of the pulpit are threatened in such circumstances. Vice and worldliness and fashion aim at being high in place, if they have not already seated themselves on the highest pinnacle, and the old fashioned discipline is laughed at, is set at naught.

HAS LIBERALITY INCREASED?

It seems doubtful too, whether there be a real increase of Christian liberality. That year after year the sums reported as given to religious objects are larger in amount there is no doubt. But when the rapid growth of material wealth is taken into account, it is somewhat questionable whether the liberality be increasing in proportion to that growth. Because a man gives \$100 now for every \$10 he gave some years ago, it by no means follows that he gives more in the sight of God than he gave then. He very possibly may be giving far less. In individual cases there is growth in this department, your Committee believes. It is easy to see, however, that there is lack of equality in bearing the burdens of the Church. Some give much according to their means, while others give very little even when they seem to swell the Lord's treasury enormously.

CLAIMS OF THE YOUNG.

Some of the reports complain of a lack in the godly up-bringing of the young, and consequent on that the slender attachment which many cherish for the denominational connexion in which they have been brought up. It is not liberality of sentiment (so-called) that is the cause of so many being indifferent as to what body of believers they join themselves, it is rather absence of any definite convictions of any kind as to the danger in which they are and how to escape from that danger. The indifference unfortunately is not as to which they will attach themselves, but rather as to whether or not they will attach themselves to any. Much of the blame of this state of matters rests on parents. An illustration of conduct on the part of parents which leads to such indifference as is referred to, is furnished by a member of Committee. It is this, that parents residing at a distance