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**FORWARD !**

God is evermore by his word and providence bidding us to go forward. There is no insurmountable obstacle in our way when under the banner of Christ. Seas may rage furiously, but at our Leader's command the proud waves must be still: nay, they must form a protecting wall for us on the right hand and on the left while we march through the deep as on dry land. No enemy can overcome us. The forces of evil may pursue us with malignant energy; but the pillar of fire which gives us light proves to them a cloud of thick darkness barring their way. Dreary deserts full of danger lie between us and the Promised Land; but there are oases where we may rest; there are perennial fountains of living water to quench our thirst; there is manna in abundance for all the host of the Lord. Well may we move forward with such prospects to cheer us on.

There is no standing still for the Church, or the individual Christian. When we make up our minds to rest on our laurels, then danger is at hand: then worldliness, selfishness, ungodly fear and foolhardiness, may creep into the citadel, and bring in their train countless calamities. Progress is the law of healthy life; to halt is but one step less perilous than to retrograde; and retrogression is the sure road to utter ruin.

Are we as a Church standing still, or idly halting? Are we in any danger of rusting or corroding to destruction. Now is the suitable time to ask and to answer this question throughout the bounds of our Synod. The Supreme Court of our Church is in

session while these words are passing through the press. Statistical tables, verbal statements, Presbyterian reports, will tell their tale of life and activity; of slumber and spiritual death. God is familiar with all the facts already. He, the searcher of hearts, has examined us and our work, and is perfectly acquainted with "statistics" that are beyond mortal ken.

While we cannot usurp the prerogative of Deity and search the hearts of men—while many facts must lie hidden from our eyes until the "day shall reveal them,"—there are materials enough within our reach to enable us to judge whether or not we have been marching forward in obedience to our Master's command. Two of our ministers, one of our probationers, and many of our members have been removed by death within the last Synodical year. Had the Lord seen fit to call you away, what account could you have rendered of your stewardship. Would the talent be found wrapt in a napkin?—or increased five fold, or ten fold? What have you done to strengthen the congregation of which you are a member? Perhaps you have done much to weaken it by careless attendance on the means of grace, and by partial or total neglect of the prayer meeting. Examine yourself too with relation to the Sabbath School—the aid and comfort you have rendered—the pupils you have taught, or helped to gather in. Think how often you have prayed for your minister, and considered the necessities of the poor.

As a man loves his own family, so should