

venant under whose provisions they were entered, when the sign and seal of circumcision were administered—that were lewd and depraved, from the rich to the poor, from the peasant to the noble. Strong may be the position of their metropolis, but it shall not stand. Numerous may be its fortifications, increasing the probabilities that it shall hold out against the besiegers, but God has appointed them to overthrow these fortifications, and he will help them in the work. The wall of defence may be complete at every part, but God musters his forces round about it, and encourages them to the assault—“Go ye up upon her walls and destroy; but make not a full end: *take away her battlements, for they are not the Lord's.*”

External defences will not avail when the necessity exists for internal reformation. To trust in the former, when no respect is paid to the latter, is to adopt a course which will certainly end in disappointment and vexation. Jerusalem's battlements shall not save the city so long as injustice and oppression are in her streets, insolence towards God among her inhabitants, rejection of his word and departure from his worship.—Yet how prone are men to multiply defences of their own invention, and neglect the true means of safety! So had it been with the Jews:—having broken their national covenant, and proved disloyal to their King, they increased the fortifications of their city, that they may be able to withstand the enemy he employs to punish them—their confidence being withdrawn from God is placed on the structures their own hands have reared.

So has it been with the Church of Christ. In many cases she has corrupted the purity of New Testament doctrine, and made additions to her code and ritual, without the sanction of her Lawgiver. She has surrendered the spirituality of her character, and ceased to maintain her distinctness from the kingdoms of the world. She has displayed precisely the same feeling that was evinced by the Israelites, when they would have a king, that they might be like other nations. She has gone down to Egypt for help; she has stayed on horses and trusted in chariots, because they were many, and in horsemen, because they were very strong, and she has not looked to the Holy One of Israel, neither sought the Lord. She has been constructing outworks, when she should have been purifying her sanctuary. Disbelieving the promise that God would be a wall of fire round about her, she has erected battlements according to her own understanding,—instead of an inward reformation she has been