

cases rendered the visit to them worse than in vain! How pertinaciously have sellers of intoxicating drinks laboured, along with their landlords, accomplices in profaneness, to get permission to keep the Sabbath after their manner! how often have they declared that but for their Sabbath sales they could not support their families! Were we not told on official authority, that the respectable sellers of intoxicating drinks in our city had been prevailed on to consent to shut their shops on Sabbath, provided others would be made to do so? Alas, what respectability! What ideas of Sabbath-keeping! I ask you, is not the Christian who, from these and thousands of other sources of information, must know that the use of intoxicating drinks is the great cause of Sabbath desecration and sanctuary desertion, and yet insists on using these drinks, and still all the while prays and labours for Sabbath honour and sanctuary attendance,—the Ephraim in my text, “a cake not turned.”

12th. *The office-bearer in the church of Christ who rules or teaches, or prays and labours for Zion's prosperity, and still countenances the use of intoxicating drinks, is the Ephraim in my text,—“a cake not turned.”*

Now what do Christian office-bearers profess? They pray that Jerusalem may put on her beautiful garments; they pray for her peace; that the mountain of the Lord's house may be established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and that all nations may flow unto it; that the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end. For what do they rule in God's house? That they may separate the precious from the vile. They cast out the swearer, the sabbath-breaker, the drunkard. They depose the drunken deacon, elder, minister: why not also deacon, elder, minister, who is mighty to drink wine, a man of strength to mingle strong drink, who has drunk more, it may be, than the man whom he has deposed? Where can he draw the line of demarcation, while intoxicating drinks are being used by rulers? Will not their discipline for drunkenness resolve itself into a question of physiology rather than of theology, of stomach rather than of conscience? In casting out the drunkard they do well, and in preaching from “Be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess?” “Watch and be sober;” “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” In all this they do well. They sometimes vaunt of foreign lands that they have banished intoxicating drinks from the land, and from their periodical meetings. It is thus in some cases known to me. They have enjoined on the convicted drunkard, minister, preacher, and member, entire abstinence from intoxicating drinks. Yes! Now, why all this, but because they know the moderate use of them to be dangerous, whilst abstinence is safety? Why then should ministers, elders, deacons, preachers, and members, use what they know and have thus systematically denounced to be dangerous? Now, if dangerous at meetings wholly of ministers, whose principles are more confirmed, and temptation-resistance more powerful; on what principle is it that the same ministers see no danger in their using intoxicating drinks among their flock, in private houses, with the weak in faith, and in presence of the young? It might have been thought that, in such circumstances, the danger would have been greater, and the abstinence more imperative as a duty. By what argument can the user of such drinks enforce abstinence on the user of them to excess? In all their desertions of the intoxicating cup, they act as Ephraim ought to do. But alas! there is another side. They still use intoxicating drinks, they show it; they vaunt of it; they say this is the privilege that Christ gave to his church and office-bearers; they quote the Saviour's example; were it so, how many would gladly follow it! But I ask, where do they find this example? They say, had not Christ drunk intoxicating drinks, he would not have been called a wine-bibber. What! do such masters of Israel hold that he sometimes blasphemed, else he would never have been called a blasphemer? And yet he was condemned for blasphemy. Ont upon such comments! their authors need that one teach them again what be the first principles of the oracles of God. They condemn those who refuse to drink intoxicating drinks, and, for this cause, exclude them from their wonted associations! Look how pitiable are such cases! men praying for the abolition of drunkenness, and still encouraging additions to it; using but which makes all the drunkards that have been, are, and will be in the world, and paralyses the church in it—contending for its use as for their Christian liberty! Strange notions must some office-bearers have of Christian liberty. I knew one who contended for his Christian liberty and refused to give it up—liberty to attend the theatre—it was for this he was reproved. Only suppose a minister preaching from Gal. v. 1. “Stand fast in the

liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” and in branching out his discourse thus: 1. the liberty to attend the theatre; 2. the liberty to play cards and dice; 3. the liberty to use intoxicating drinks. Ah! it is sounder and safer doctrine. “Whoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.” How can office-bearers expel members for drunkenness, and afterwards sit down together to drink that which caused their brother's expulsion? “Thou that judgest dost the same things.”

The times of ignorance God has long winked at. Now this period seems about to be wound up. He now commands all everywhere to repent. The church must renounce intoxicating drinks, else He who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, will on account of them remove our candlestick out of his place. She must repent. The question has now assumed such a practical phase as plainly proclaims the crisis at hand. I hope it is a favourable one. I see its parallel beyond the Atlantic. The rage of southern slaveholders cast under the table of Congress all petitions against slavery, denouncing them as rebellion. In this present session, the latest intelligence left them discussing the right to petition in hopes of carrying it. For this I thank the Patron of the oppressed; it tells me the oppressor's rod will speedily be broken. So, us to my present theme, do the past shadows portend coming events. For instance,—and I shall at this late hour only give a sample, by which you may judge the rest. Portions of ordinary lectures have been passed over, because leading to condemnation of tarrying at the wine. Presbytery texts have been clandestinely changed, because involving the question of the wines of Cana. In a published avowed enumeration of the causes of prostitution, the notoriously greatest of all causes, intoxicating drinks, is scarcely mentioned.* In a published report of the state of religion in Jamaica among the emancipated negroes, this glorious characteristic feature, that in some of their congregations, the abstinence society musters eight hundred strong, is not whispered.† The managers of a preaching station formally vetoed the intoxicating bottle, as the preachers' draught upon it exceeded their financial ability. A minister of our church has been seen preaching and lecturing on abstinence, or rather against drunkenness, in churches of other religious bodies on either side of a church of our own, refused though unoccupied—several elders in the interdicted church being all the while profited hearers.‡ In a neighbouring city, this question has caused commotions, such as show that ecclesiastical disruption may be produced by other causes than the alleged one of state-tyranny. Do not these examples tell you, my friends, that there be many Ephraims, “many cakes not turned!” Still we rejoice that such cases are being seen in their true character, that they are becoming fewer,—and fewer they must become, else the natural consequences must follow, consequences which every good man must deplore. They will, however, ultimately promote abstinence from intoxicating drinks, till it become universal,—till a shop for the use of intoxicating drinks shall be as rare in the streets of Britain, as is a slave-ship in her docks; till the proprietors of both shall alike be held and treated as felons. The ship-owner has, within my own remembrance, been consigned to the felon list, and they are alive that will see shop-owners inserted in the same register; if the God of mercy does not intend to put into our hands the cup of his indignation, and convert our beloved land into a Babylon for desolation and a Tyre for contempt. I desire not the woful day, O Lord, thou knowest; to whom, under thee, can I look to avert this fierce anger! May I look to the priests, the ministers of the Lord, whose duty it is to weep, as of old, between the porch and the altar, saying, “Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach. This is their duty. O that they were,—even at this eleventh hour,—to awake and to imitate their American brethren in the ministry, who headed the holy crusade against intemperance,—hence its glorious progress. Ministers there are abstainers; they would not, if otherwise, be listened to; hence it is that whole congregations abstain, that while districts and towns are without a store for the sale of intoxicating drinks. The ministers must arise, or the people must arise without them; then shall drunkenness disappear, and along with it may other practices which this book condemns, but which are too common among Christians. How long, O Lord, must the proverb still be used in this land in which thou hast so long had thy dwelling, “Ephraim is a cake not turned.” Turn thou it, O Lord, and it shall be turned, that it may yet be termed, “Hephzabah,” and “Beulah.” Turn, in the meantime, O thou God of Zion, thy own church, that thou mayest yet say of her, “This is my rest, here will I

* Wardlaw.

† Sec. Mag.

‡ Kirkwall.

§ Glasgow.