

in our dwellings, the light is not confined to the room in which it is set. It shines out through our windows, and streams through every chink and cranny of our doors;—dispelling in part the thick darkness of the night and affording, like a guiding star, a clue to the weary traveller on his homeward path. So is it with our Sabbath day meetings and Sabbath day exercises. They are not confined to our own flocks, they often tell on the outside world. It cannot be otherwise. 70,000 professors of religion, hearing and learning and treasuring up in their memories, the most precious truths of the gospel. 70,000 professors mingling and associating with the outer world;—talking, conversing, reasoning, about the unseen realities of eternity;—70,000 professors praying with their families, reading and explaining their Bibles, teaching their catechisms, holding fast their confession of faith, and singing their psalms and hymns;—all these things, while they have a binding power upon the claims within, must have not a little power on the outside world. In calculating our influence as a denomination, therefore, and while looking at its immediate and direct power, we must not forget its indirect and social power. We must sum up its outside, as well as its inside effects.

But this is not all. There is yet another view which must be taken, if we would see thoroughly the amount of this influence. We must look at the *extent of the ground* which it covers, or rather, in which it operates. If these 70,000 were all located in one district of the country, their influence would certainly be great. Centralization would give them many advantages. But we hold, scattered as they are, throughout the whole of the lower provinces, that influence is much greater. Every congregation is diffusing this influence in its own locality; every pastor—"the angel of his church"—is casting down and around him, his own amount of heavenly light.—In the sweet and fertile island of Prince Edward,—in the gray hills and pastoral valleys of Cape Breton,—in the gorgeous woodlands and by the massive streams of New Brunswick,—in the boreas-like climate of Newfoundland,—in the sunny cedar-bearing Bermudas—and in humble, but loved Nova Scotia—in all these province, this influence is felt and rapidly working its way. Like the seven-coloured bow in full arch, it spans the lower provinces, from one point to its opposite of the colonial horizon. Is it necessary, then, to say that looking at this extent of ground on which this influence is operating it should nerve one and all of us to contend earnestly for the faith? God is opening a wide door for us, shall we refuse to enter in?

3. *Our Responsibility.* We might refer

here to the responsibility which lies upon us in reference to these 70,000 souls. How precious is one soul! how much more so 70,000. But this is not the responsibility to which we now allude. It is a special, a peculiar responsibility. These provinces are comparatively new. Newness characterises every thing about them. In old countries, everything is fixed and settled—their manners, their customs, their principles, their government, their religion, their institutions. Centuries have rolled over these, and embedded them in their hearts and affections: on the contrary, in these provinces, all these are comparatively in a state of formation. Now to us has been committed the formation of their religious institutions and the establishment of gospel ordinances. What a noble opportunity is presented us, for preaching the gospel in all its purity, and establishing scriptural institutions and ordinances! For centuries to come these institutions and ordinances, may enlighten and bless and comfort God's people. But if we neglect our duty in this respect—if we prove indifferent or unconcerned, what shall our responsibility be? As we sow now, generations may reap afterwards. This, then, is the responsibility to which we refer. If we act a godly and christian part, men will rise up and call us blessed; if not, ours may be the doom of the unfaithful servant. Is not this another reason by which we are urged "earnestly to contend for the faith?"

Having now endeavoured to consider the faith for which we ought to contend;—a scriptural faith in opposition to infidelity; a Protestant faith, in opposition to Popery, and a Presbyterian faith, in opposition to other sects and parties; and having considered some special reasons why we should contend for the faith;—our unity, our influence, and our responsibility, we shall now conclude with a very few remarks, applying the whole.

"Watchman what of the night, watchman what of the night?" Looking at the strange events which are everywhere occurring around us—strange events in the revolutions of nations, in the circumstances of churches, in the manifestations of God's providence;—looking at these and such as these, may we not put this question, in reference to the history of this world? "At what point of its cycle has it arrived? How far distant from the end?" "Watchman what of the night?" But may not each office-bearer of the church, and especially each minister apply this question to himself, as well as to the history of the world? "What of my course run? How much work may I yet do? When will the end be?" How brief is the working period in the life of a minister of the gospel? How rapidly do the years of activity roll