

have read much on this subject, and my impression is, that in all ages of the Christian era, ministers and other good men have assigned to their own times a wider departure from the truth, of many who had "run well," than in any period which had preceded them. They have mourned over the degeneracy; but it has been the means of arousing them to greater exertion, to check the growth of the evil, to stay the ever-impetuous torrent of vice, and endeavour to allay the bitterness of human woe. The origin of this prevailing imagination is to be found in this principle, that the remote bears no comparison with the present. The deepest sorrows find mitigation in the softening hand of time, and the greatest evils will at length cease, except at times, to embitter the memory. We feel the depressing effects of a low state of religion by our own eyes witnessing it, and by its grievous influence on our own hearts. The depressing influences of such a state in another age, although most eloquently described and lamented, excite the deepest interest, but fail to stir up the depths of the human heart.

The power of Evangelical Truth has never, perhaps, since the days of the Apostles and early Christians, made greater progress than within the last hundred years; and although it must be admitted to have spread latterly over a far wider surface of society, in a more general recognition of its awakening principles, it is questionable if its more general diffusion has not weakened its power, and whether the more extensive admission of those principles has not robbed it of a portion of its vitality, and rendered light the cross which was once so heavy to be borne. The term "Methodist," or "Saint," *then* signifying in scoffing language a person who had become too religious, is seldom now heard as a term of reproach; when applied at all, the former is used with reference to the denomination of that name; and the latter, as in the days of the Apostles, to all of any name who justly deserve it. This state of things, therefore, although producing more general cheerfulness of disposition, may not be deemed without its attendant danger of forgetfulness of God.

In our times there is a larger exhibition of charity among those who may be considered prominent in the profession of evangelical truth; and as this heavenly gift is destined to endure and expand throughout eternity, we may take