

views conflict. The friendship of the world is enmity against God. The whole influence of the world, the flesh and the devil, is ever against a pure Christianity. Something of the name they will tolerate, a perverted and corrupted gospel will find helpers and admirers in unregenerate men. Even a dead orthodoxy which satisfies itself with prophesying smooth things, with dwelling on abstract metaphysical topics, may be tolerated, but the truth which saves, the living piercing discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, excites anger and opposition." This is a hard saying, Who can hear it?" This opposition will manifest itself in various ways, either by active relentless open hostility, by cunning craftiness, or by a passive yet determined resistance. The faith has foes which are not to be despised for strength, and whose malignity is excited and kept in action by the fierce spirit of him who yet exalted himself against God. It is true that the days of persecution in our own land have ceased. This form of hostility, whether it be the open crushing tyranny, or the petty galling spite, is found in these times and in many places to be a mistake, producing oftentimes the very results it aimed to counteract; but the foes are none the less deadly because the mode of attack is altered. The truth itself is resisted in the very outset by the heart of man. Were all other opposition to cease, we should find the ruling power ready to meet us there. And while our assaults are thus directed against the heart, there also the enemy prepares and plants his engines of defence. In this conflict the author of all evil is the prime mover. "We wrestle" says the Apostle, "not against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The pleasures of the world, its pursuits, anxieties, honors,—these case men's souls in triple adamant against the demands of God. Not only so, but many of the tendencies of the present age must be met and grappled with as foes; the restlessness, the gain-seeking, the tendency to display, the multiplication of all kinds of literature, sensation newspapers, novels, and poems; the arena of political action; the desire for excitement of all kinds, even in religion itself,—the craving after stimulus; the mind and body wearied, and jaded, ever seeking something startling to rouse it