

in the days of the Apostles, have been instrumental in promoting the advancement of true religion.

Take for example, in the history of the Church of Scotland, the general assembly at Glasgow, in 1638, and the convocation at Edinburgh, in 1842. By the former of these, Prelacy was overthrown, and the work of reformation carried forward to a point higher than any it had before reached: by the latter, the separation of the Church from the state was determined on; when the countenance of the connexion involved a submission on the part of the latter. Yes, the Free Church of Scotland, with all its high capacities for evangelistic labour at home and abroad, was evolved from the convocation at Edinburgh. Or, speaking properly, we may say that the spirit of Christ was with his servants when they met to seek him by prayer and mutual counsel, and led them to the high resolve to sacrifice all the emoluments and advantages they had enjoyed in their connexion with the state, in order to the freedom of the Church, and the maintenance of Christ's supremacy in it.

And should not our Church courts ever seek the presence, and countenance, and blessing of the great King? Alas! what guilt is contracted when, through levity on the part of the members, in forgetfulness of him, or their indulgence of sinful tempers, his presence is not realized, even while they formally meet and deliberate in his name!

Would it not be alike competent and proper for our commission, as a representative of the Synod, to recommend to all the congregations of the Church the observance of a day for humiliation, and prayer, and intercession—for humiliation, especially, on account of our short comings as a Church;—and for prayer and intercession for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our congregations, our college, the Church generally, and all the earth?

And, supposing even that no scheme for the action of Presbyteries in promoting the revival of religion within their bounds were devised, might it not be well for the commission to recommend Presbyteries to hold special meetings, from time to time, with congregations, with a view to stir up the office-bearers and the people, to press after the attainment of the measure of grace and privilege which they may severally reach.

We believe that when some two years ago a visitation, by the appointment of the Synod, was made to all our congregations, some measures of refreshment was the result of it to the office-bearers and people. And we have no doubt that visitations by Presbyteries, or deputations of Presbyteries, might be so conducted as to produce results even still more profitable.

In offering these suggestions, we have no fear that our brethren in the ministry will receive them in any ungracious spirit. We have said that we have been moved to make them in view of the approaching meeting of the commission of Synod, and of the business that has been referred to it.

But we would also state, though it be but to reiterate sentiments already expressed, that for our Church to maintain its position, and to extend itself in the land, and be a true witness for Christ, it must possess and manifest religion in a revived form—religion of the very type and impress of the scriptures. A dead religion, like the old moderation of Scotland, may be kept up by the aid of endowments—to spread extensively it has no power, unless it borrow a temporary life from some malig-

nant error, such as the Puseyism of the English Church.

Hence, one view of our duty to seek a true revival.

Again, we are in a land where the enemies of Christ may very soon acquire great power, unless the public mind be won over to the Saviour; and and we are advancing onward to times, in which Satan, anticipating his being soon shut up in the dark abyss, shall have "great wrath." Well, then, does it become us, and all the Churches of Christ, to be preparing for the trials and the contests that are before us. The call to churches, as well as individual Christians, is, "watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

One other consideration may be added to enforce the duty of church rulers to seek the revival of the church. That, at this very time, Christians, in various sections of the church, are confessing or bewailing the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit's influence from the church. And, if it be indeed so, that the Lord has a controversy with his people, then the watchman, who should be the first to sound an alarm on account of an approaching foe, should be no less prompt to warn the citizens of Zion, when their Lord and King is offended with them, and "shew them their transgression and their sin," and call them to repentance, that he may not in judgment hide himself from them. Let us hear in God's own words, the character and the duty of true ministers: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night. Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

#### MEETING OF COMMISSION.

The attention of the members of the Commission, whose names will be seen at pages 41 and 42 of the printed Minutes of Synod, is called to the following quotations from the minutes:

"The Commission to have two stated meetings during the year, viz., at Kingston, on the first Wednesday of October, and at Toronto, on the first Wednesday of February, 1848, and not to have any adjournments, excepting such as may be made from day to day, at the stated meetings; and Presbyteries to use their diligence to have one or more of their ministers at these meetings,—seven to form a quorum, of whom five shall be ministers. The matters referred to the Commission are as follows:

"1st. An overture for promoting the revival of religion throughout the Church.

"2nd. An overture on the subject of Ecclesiastical Registers.

"3rd. An overture respecting arrangements for the preaching of ministers when assembled at Synod.

"4th. An overture for promoting a better attendance of ministers and elders at the meeting of Synod.

"5th. A letter from the Presbytery of New Brunswick."

When it is recollected that these subjects are of great importance—what, indeed, can equal in importance the first of them?—and that the Commission did not meet in October, from the want of a quorum, and that there is to be no other meeting before the meeting of the Synod in June, it is not too much to expect that the members of the Commission should put themselves to some inconvenience to attend the ensuing meeting. Besides the business properly belonging to the Commission, there are many other matters of great importance, to which its deliberations might properly be directed.

A few weeks ago, it seemed as though there were a call for petitions from all our congregations against the projected division of the endowments of King's College, amongst the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians of the Established Church of Scotland, the Methodists, and Papists; and, though this may have been dispensed with, from the result of the late general election, it is well worth the consideration of the representatives of the Church how far we should endeavour to avail ourselves of King's College for the education of our theological students in literature and philosophy; and what suggestions we should offer in regard to a change of its present constitution and system of management. There are a few, at least, of our legislators who, we are sure, will listen respectfully to any suggestions which we ourselves, or the representatives of other evangelical churches, might make to them on this subject.

#### Original Communications.

##### For the Record.

"When I am weak, then am I strong."—2 Cor. xii. 10.

I. It is *spiritual weakness* of which the Apostle here speaks. All are weak in this respect. Man-kind, by the fall, lost all ability, as well as all desire, to walk in the way of God's commandments. Hence, our lost and undone condition by nature is not unfrequently expressed in scripture by the intimation of our weakness and helplessness. "When we were yet *without strength*, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." When we lay in the ruins of the fall, under the merited wrath of God, and the power of sin and Satan, without strength to resist the just indignation of our offended Creator, or to deliver ourselves from it,—when we had no inclination to restore ourselves to the forfeited favour of God, and no ability to do so, had we been so disposed,—when we were thus utterly impotent, and helpless, and dead in sin, Christ died for us.

It is not, however, merely to the *reality* of this weakness, which is universal among the human race, but also to the *apprehension* of it, that Paul refers in these words. It is not merely the fact of his being weak, but the fact of his being *deeply conscious* of his weakness, that he here sets forth. He was once so insensible of his spiritual weakness, and as unconcerned about it, as the most careless and profane that we see around us. He was once as much pulled up by the conceit of his own moral and intellectual superiority, as the most self-satisfied Pharisee, either of the present or of any by-gone age. But the day of his self-dependence and self-complacency has passed away. "I was alive," says he, "without the law once,"—time was, when I vainly imagined myself to be not altogether destitute of power to please God by the observance of his requirements. And no man hath more ample grounds than I had to entertain such confidence: for, "after the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee, and touching the righteousness of the law,"—the righteousness which arises from a scrupulous attention to outward ordinance, I am "blameless." "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." On the very first glimpse which I obtained of the spirituality and breadth of God's holy law, which extends to the thoughts and intents of the heart, my inward corruption, of which I had previously been unconscious, manifested itself in all its strength, and malignity, and virulence; and my proud spirit rose in rebellion against the exaction of the perfect purity required by that law which is holy, and just, and good. And when that law was still applied to my conscience by the operation of the Holy Spirit, I became convinced, against my own natural will, of my spiritual death, and of my consequent utter inability, by my very best performances, to come near satisfying the demands of a just and holy God. And as that law ever and ever pursued me fleeing from it, it "shut me up" at length to the faith of Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Let us endeavour, yet a little further, to paraphrase the Apostle's experience.