

were scarce out of the sight of Egypt before they were seen dancing around their Golden Calf!

The ancient Christians, also, when they learned the gospel of Christ, and saw the weakness of human philosophy, were led to say with Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life." But the Apostles were not dead, before philosophy and vain deceit had so eclipsed the gospel in the minds of many, that Paul was led to say: "Brethren, I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." And who can read the history of the church from that day down without feeling the necessity of watching unto prayer?

But I pass to a second evil which is in our midst, and whose withering influence has long been felt to our sorrow. It is that old Athenian spirit, that is always seeking or telling some new thing. It is a spirit that is ever ready to run after everything that comes up, to investigate it. It feels perfectly competent to judge of all doubtful matters. When rebuked it meets you with this Scripture: "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." It is a spirit that is generally quick-sighted but not far-sighted. It views every thing on the run, and frequently has a smattering of every thing, but a sound understanding of nothing. I have known some churches, and many brethren, so drunk with this spirit, that they died for the want of an appetite for the bread of life. It is a restless spirit that lives only on excitement, and the many "hobbies" of the present day afford it ample sustenance, and it lives and thrives beyond measure. A few examples in our past history may serve to illustrate in some degree its baneful influence.

Some years ago the subject of capital punishment began to be discussed in many of the newspapers, and of course, in all of our debating clubs, by both men and boys. The question finally found its way into the church, where a few preachers, and many "laymen," become wise beyond measure. Their eloquence made some of our church walls ring, and their fame took wings and flew through the papers the length and breadth of the land. To awaken the church to take hold of the matter we were told there was no great evil in the land, but the church was responsible for it. And many a time have I been accosted thus: "Why don't you preachers come out on this subject? You occupy the ears of the people one day in seven, and can do more to revolutionize community than any other class of citizens. But instead of that, the pulpit is drunk! and opens not its mouth against this robe of heathen-