

THE WORK AND SPIRIT OF REFORM.

Luther, the bold but not overly polished German who first largely disturbed the repose of the Romish sanctuary, says:—"Too much prudence is displeasing to God. It is impossible to make a stand for the gospel without creating some disturbance and offence. The word of God is a sword, waging war, overthrowing and destroying; it is a casting down, a disturbance, and comes, as the prophet Amos says, as a lion in the forest."

The preceding may be profitably read twice by some amiable men who desire to obey the Supreme Captain and use the weapons of his warfare as faithful soldiers without hurting any one. As for us, we want the Spirit's well-tempered sword, with the edge as keen as it can be made in the armoury of God, to slay every giant or every dwarf who refuses loyalty to the King of kings. Yes, and we want the gushing tide of divine affection—"the love of God shed abroad in our heart"—in order that every candid mind may perceive that every battle we fight is out of pure reverence for the statutes of the Heavenly Prince and out of fervent attachment to the Author of the Redemption which is Eternal.

But on looking backward upon the page of truthful history, and finding the evidence clear as light that the purest and noblest men have had their motives impeached, their labors misrepresented, their principles falsely if not wickedly interpreted, and their character slanderously assailed, we ought not to expect to escape the frowning storm of human wrath that in greater or less measure falls upon all who successfully witness for the whole truth of heaven. While then some kindly disposed people in their labors and efforts are keeping the question supremely before them, What will men think of us?—we earnestly pray to have the question uppermost in our mind and nearest our heart, What does the God of truth appoint and approve? And as it concerns manner, we would greatly prefer to speak too bluntly rather than to speak too smoothly, in these times when there are so many smooth ways of leading men to perdition.

D. O.

A false friend is like a shadow on a dial-plate which appears in fine weather, but vanishes on the approach of a cloud.