

I suppose they will not call in question for a moment that there can be such a thing as a genuine revival of religion, and that they have seen such a one. There would be little of the counterfeit and the spurious in such movements if the best qualified persons in the church would take hold of them always. We have to deal with human nature as we find it, and use the best means available to lead men to the Saviour. Sometimes we have to do with the highly emotional, and they are soon moved to joy or sorrow. Wisdom is required in dealing with them; they are no small class in every congregation. Then we find a class of persons whose judgment is more exercised with regard to religion. And we have a third class, of a cold, calculating turn of mind, and who receive the truth with less objective manifestation than others. We rejoice that the Bible is suited to men of all climates, characters, conditions and temperaments of mind. We must never forget that God selects His own instruments to do His work, and who is man that he should call in question His divine wisdom and procedure? It is well known to many that when Mr. Moody went into some parts of Great Britain there was a class of intelligent Christians who at first stood aloof from him and his work; but as that work widened and extended, their prejudices gave way, and some of them became the most active workers. This was not at all a solitary case. We are not to abandon duty just because God's work sometimes gets into unwise hands. Without refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord the small churches would, in time, die out altogether. In the hands of God-appointed men we have nothing to fear from revivals, but much good to expect.

In the revival in which John Wesley and George Whitfield took so large a part, the formation of new Christian bodies became a necessity; it could not be avoided; and has it not been, in the hands of Providence, an unspeakable blessing unto the world? We have nothing at all to fear from the formation of any "new sect" by the itinerating revivalists of the day. Indeed, I do not think there is the slightest desire on their part to make an attempt of that kind. The Church has nothing to dread from outside revival work, if only she is faithful to herself and her work. We have to fear far more from divided opinion and action in the Church than from anything else, in doing the work assigned us. Too often the pastor of a church is left almost alone in his work. Let the members of the churches attend punctually all the regular means of grace, and take their proper share therein, and abstain from running about in a kind of spiritual vagrancy, and then the Church will put on her beautiful garments and attract sinners to the house of the Lord.

If within the sphere of our own churches we do our work well, we shall also find some time to go outside to preach salvation to the most down-trodden of mankind. We cannot ignore special efforts in religious work, "lest we should be found even to fight against God." Ministers may profitably help each other by counsel and labour in all such services; but let not the members in the churches be without a work assigned to them as their own. From the Church we have a right to expect light and salvation to go to perishing souls—but purchased souls. And now that we have entered upon a new ecclesiastical year, let us seek the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon all our churches, and then our work shall not be in vain in the Lord. The husbandman is now looking up, full of hope that his labours will be crowned with an abundant success; so let the spiritual worker look for his harvest time of souls, that shall be the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord. And when showers of grace descend and the work of the Lord is revived, let us be careful to relegate to their own places all cant, disorder and wildfire, and prayerfully abide by the teaching of the Divine Word. We have a right to pray for revivals and to expect them, and they will come most assuredly. The past history of the Church is proof enough of this. Most devoutly we may pray—"O Lord, revive thy work!"

Markham.

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