

day, rejoiced and made merry over the extinction or destruction, as they thought, of the Reformers, Puritans, and Covenanters of other days. And they thought they had secured their graves by the weapons of ridicule and carnal wisdom, under the mask of moderation, prudence, and morality.

We look upon it then, as already said, as a most favourable sign of the times, that we are privileged to behold the resurrection, so to speak, of those witnesses—the re-production or re-appearance of the Reformers, Puritans, and Covenanters in our midst. The publication of the “Calvin Translation Society” of the Works of Calvin commenced some twenty years ago, was the inauguration of the series of kindred publications that have since issued from the Press—exerted a most wholesome influence upon the ministers of the Gospel both in Britain and America—created and increased a taste for solid and systematic theology, for massive and profound views of Scripture. It was right and proper that Calvin, the greatest of the great men of the Reformation, and indeed of the Reformed Churches, should have the preference, and take the precedence in this respect. And it was no less becoming that the works of John Owen, the theologian of the sixteenth century, the greatest of British theologians, and the name we would place next to Calvin, should immediately follow those of Calvin. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the influence for good the works of Owen, published by Johnston & Hunter, had upon the Christian public, both upon their heads and hearts, but especially upon the Ministers of the Gospel. And we rejoice to know that the demand for them is on the increase. The publications of the Wodrow Society in Scotland, as well as those of the Parker Society in England, have also greatly contributed towards the establishment of sound theology—the theology of the Reformation.

The series of “Puritan Divines,” now in course of publication by Mr. Nichol of Edinburgh, amply testifies the increased demand and growing popularity of such works; and what a revolution has taken place in the views and feelings of the Christian public since the reign of Moderatism in last century.

But it is time we should call attention to Bunyan and the edition of his works now in course of publication by Mr. McKenzie, and which occasioned these remarks. Little did Bunyan think, when lodged in Bedford jail, that he was to write there, what would turn out to be the most popular religious book in the world: although, like Lord Bacon, after he had written it, he knew that his book would last, and that posterity would not willingly let it die. When he consulted his friends about publishing it, they were much divided on that point:

“Some said, ‘John, print it;’ others said, ‘Not so,’
Some said, ‘It might do good,’ others said, ‘No.’”

Those objecting to its publication did so on the ground of the fictitious and allegorical cast he had given it. But Bunyan with his strong sense settled the matter for himself. He stated that the Old Testament was full of types, metaphors, and shadows, and thereby instruction was imparted; and that Christ and his Apostles spake in parables; and therefore the method he took of presenting truth had the divine sanction; and, hence, if others abused it to serve the devil, that was no reason why he should not use it for the glory of God. As might be expected his book at once became popular, but popular with a certain class only, and that a very limited class in comparison with the sway it wields now over the Christian world. Even in the days of Cowper, when that evangelical bard panegyricized Bunyan, he abstained from mentioning his name, “lest so despised a name should move a sneer.” Bunyan, however, was popular in the days of Cowper, although not so generally appreciated by rich and poor, learned and unlettered, as he is now. He stands by himself, and has secured a place indisputably his own in our religious or theological literature. There is not another author in any department of theology who maintains his place so securely as Bunyan, not only that he is the master of his department, but he is so without as much as a rival. The fields trodden by Calvin, Owen,