

and sanctified learning, the enemy in disguise has nevertheless stolen a march on the guardians of truth, and sometimes obtained a place among the defenders of the faith—has furtively sapped for a season the foundations of the Church and grievously wounded Christ in the house of His friends. This bulwark of the Church's tranquility has been built by God. Here, as well as throughout all the other operations of the Divine Government, prominence is given to the principle of peace and order. This principle we witness in the construction of the natural world—in the revolutions of starry systems—in the mechanism of the human body—in the framework of a mysterious Providence, in the development of his moral kingdom as well as in the economy of grace. Verily, "God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all churches of the Saints." I. Cor. XIV. 33.

Apart from the authority of Divine appointment, we believe that the moral and intellectual constitution of the human family has been so impaired and shaken by sin, that certain agencies are instinctively recognized as an absolute necessity, upon which should fall the main responsibility under God, of building that spiritual edifice of which Christ is at once the foundation and the corner stone. Human nature has learned, in this matter, to distrust itself.

The commission then which we hold is, beyond comparison, the most glorious—the most honourable, and the most responsible ever entrusted to men, a commission on which the highest archangel would gladly enter—to publish the joyous news of salvation by the blood of Jesus once crucified but now exalted to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins—to tell exiled man of a Paradise regained, for every one that believeth in Jesus. This heavenly message hath already burst through the restraints of territorial confinement, and it claims, in prospective conquest, the utmost bounds of a lost and ruined world. However feeble or inadequate to this God-like enterprise, the ministry of the word may appear in the eyes of men, as we contemplate the principle of its divine origin we confidently look onward to a grand and glorious issue. The vessels to which this treasure has been committed are indeed earthen vessels—yet the impress of divinity elevates them far above human influence—far above human resources—far above diabolic power. It has been well said—"The ministry is clothed in its own majesty—it travels in its own strength—it is independent alike of friends and foes. On this truth rest its success and stability. On it the seal of eighteen centuries has been already fixed, and, in the nineteenth century, amid tempests which have shaken empires to the dust, and assaults directed against its divinity, its position is alike commanding and impregnable." Despite the rancorous spirit which first unveiled itself in the days of the Apostles, and which ever since has poured forth its venom against the foolishness of preaching the doctrines of the Cross—despite the senseless clamours of these latter days. I appeal to the past and ask the result of the conflict when "the battle was fought in blood even to the horses' bridles." The weakness of God has been proved to be stronger than men. I ask for the enemies of the ministry of the word, and