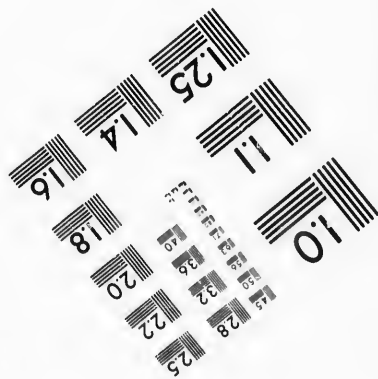
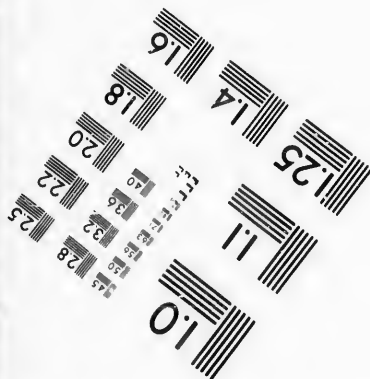
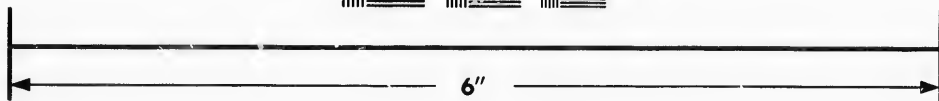
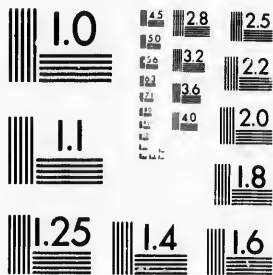


**IMAGE EVALUATION  
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic  
Sciences  
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET  
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580  
(716) 872-4503

15 28  
18 32  
20 22  
25

**CIHM/ICMH  
Microfiche  
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH  
Collection de  
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

10

**© 1987**

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloured covers/<br>Couverture de couleur  | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured pages/<br>Pages de couleur   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers damaged/<br>Couverture endommagée  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages damaged/<br>Pages endommagées   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers restored and/or laminated/<br>Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages restored and/or laminated/<br>Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover title missing/<br>Le titre de couverture manque   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/<br>Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured maps/<br>Cartes géographiques en couleur   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages detached/<br>Pages détachées  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/<br>Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Showthrough/<br>Transparence   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured plates and/or illustrations/<br>Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur  | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of print varies/<br>Qualité inégale de l'impression   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bound with other material/<br>Relié avec d'autres documents  | <input type="checkbox"/> Includes supplementary material/<br>Comprend du matériel supplémentaire   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion<br>along interior margin/<br>La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la<br>distorsion le long de la marge intérieure   | <input type="checkbox"/> Only edition available/<br>Seule édition disponible   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blank leaves added during restoration may<br>appear within the text. Whenever possible, these<br>have been omitted from filming/<br>Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées<br>lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,<br>mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont<br>pas été filmées. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata<br>slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to<br>ensure the best possible image/<br>Les pages totalement ou partiellement<br>obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,<br>etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à<br>obtenir la meilleure image possible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional comments:/<br>Commentaires supplémentaires:  |  |

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
					/						

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

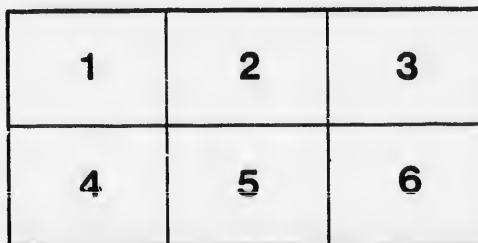
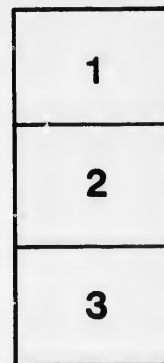
McLennan Library  
McGill University  
Montreal

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol  $\rightarrow$  (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol  $\nabla$  (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

McLennan Library  
McGill University  
Montreal

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole  $\rightarrow$  signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole  $\nabla$  signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

THE  
PR  
T

*The Prosperity of the Church in Troublous  
Times.*

# A SERMON,

PREACHED AT PICTOU, FRIDAY, FEB'Y 25th, 1814,

(THE YEAR BEFORE WATERLOO)

BY

THOMAS McCULLOCH,

WITH

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BY

REV. ROBERT GRANT,

*EAST RIVER, PICTOU, N. S.*

---

1882.

S. M. MACKENZIE, PRINTER,

New Glasgow, N. S.

S 1404

*The*

*A*

PREAC

TH

P

*The Prosperity of the Church in Troublous  
Times.*

# A SERMON,

PREACHED AT PICTOU, FRIDAY, FEB'Y 25th, 1814,  
(THE YEAR BEFORE WATERLOO)

BY

THOMAS McCULLOCH,

WITH

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BY

REV. ROBERT GRANT,

*EAST RIVER, PICTOU, N. S.*

---

1882.

S. M. MACKENZIE, PRINTER,  
New Glasgow, N. S.



The University of Toronto Press  
1917

# A SERMON

DELIVERED BY THE REV. JAMES H. WELLS, D.D.,  
AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY,  
TORONTO, ON SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 1917.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS

WELLS, JAMES H.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS

“g  
The  
disting  
possess  
served  
was litt  
when t  
years o  
Under  
been d  
with hi  
bones  
Russia  
and Le  
Russia  
Wellin  
joicing  
ed on  
S. G.  
their n  
Suc  
Europ  
Scotia  
the nu  
the or  
this se  
tation  
of No  
of the  
which  
tacet  
Knox

## INTRODUCTION.

"SISTE PAULISPER QUI PRAETERITURUS ES."\*—*Cowper.*

The sermon to which these lines are an introduction, like its distinguished author, has had a peculiar history; and, though possessed of merits of the first order, the merest accident preserved it from oblivion. It was preached in Pictou when Pictou was little better than an elder swamp. It was printed in Halifax, when the future state of Nova Scotia (Joseph Howe) was 10 years of age, and the province of Nova Scotia comparatively a forest. Under the generalship of the "Black Duke," the French had just been driven out of Canada; the Corsican adventurer had escaped with his life from among the ruins of Moscow, while the bones of 400,000 of his soldiers were whitening the plains of Russia. The sanguinary battles of Lutzen, Bautzen, Dresden, and Leipzig had been fought. In a few weeks, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia made their entry into Paris; and Wellington and Blucher their entry into London, amidst the rejoicings of emancipated Europe. Agricola had, as yet, not landed on the shores of Nova Scotia. Neither had the Youngs, the S. G. W. Archibalds, the Johnstons, and the Howes, immortalised their names.

Such is a reference to events transpiring among the nations of Europe 67 years ago. But, even then, it might be said of Nova Scotia, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis." Chief among the number, were the apostolic names of a James and a Thomas—the one a McGregor and the other a McCulloch. At the date of this sermon, the former had, as an evangelist, acquired a reputation that shall ever entitle him to be considered the Whitefield of Nova Scotia. The latter was distinguished for more originality of thought. In his younger days, there was no species of style in which he did not excel—"from grave to gay, from lively to tacetious." In inflexible firmness he was not inferior to John Knox himself. His "Popery Condemned" secured for him

Transatlantic fame. His "William and Melville" is superior to Pollok's "Ellen of the Glen." What he was in the pulpit in the time of danger—"the day of battle and of war," let the accompanying discourse serve for an illustration.

To the undersigned, it would be a labor of love to specify some of the literary achievements of such men as Rev. Kenneth John McKenzie, Rev. Donald Allan Fraser, and Rev. John McRae. Even "*ad nauseam*,"† have their faults—whether real or *imaginary*—been commented on. But, for scholarship and manly eloquence, the time is coming when their names shall yet be enshrined in the "Temple of Fame."

ROBERT GRANT.

East River, Pictou, January 20th, 1882.

\* Not quite so fast.  
† To satiety.

THE

**T** for re  
posed  
ing in  
Moun  
again,  
ing fla  
the w  
of Zio  
Babyl  
The  
tentio  
been i  
daugh  
with a  
remen  
Israel  
disple  
the Cl  
fested  
contai  
plicati  
fendin

THE  
PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH.

---

DAN. IX, 25.

THE STREET SHALL BE BUILT AGAIN, AND THE WALL, EVEN IN  
TROUBLOUS TIMES.

**T**HE affairs of the Jews in the days of this prophet, had been very far removed from their former splendour. Disregard for religion, and those crimes which flow from impiety, had exposed that nation to the judgments of God ; and they were groaning in captivity in the midst of their enemies. They had seen Mount Zion, beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth; again, they had beheld even its sanctuaries a prey to the devouring flames ; the Lord had measured out to them the bread and the water of affliction ; and they who had once joined in the songs of Zion, now hanged their harps upon the willows by the rivers of Babylon.

These events, you will perceive by this chapter, engaged the attention, and aroused the feelings, of the prophet's mind. He had been himself exalted among the princes of Babylon ; but the daughter of Zion was dwelling in the dust ; and his heart burned with affection for the captives of Jacob : in his own prosperity he remembered Jerusalem, and approved himself, to be the friend of Israel and of Israel's God. Aware of the causes of the Divine displeasure, and also, of the mercy of God in the corrections of the Church, he poured out his heart to Him who had often manifested his salvation in troublous times ; and the preceding verses contain a humble confession of the sins of Israel, and fervent supplications, that the Lord would arise and have mercy on his offending people.

To the prophet, this devotional exercise was succeeded by such a display of the goodness of God, as afforded him a cheering prospect of the approaching prosperity of the Church. Captivity and dispersion had not separated Israel from the loving kindness of the Lord; they were still the objects of His affectionate regard, and Jerusalem was graven upon the palms of his hands. In the painful discipline of the Church, His designs were mercy; and the prophet is consoled with a disclosure of the glorious result. The period approached, which would conclude the adversities of the Church in Babylon. The Lord would then manifest his remembrance of the rubbish and the stones of Zion, encompass his people with songs of deliverance, and add splendour and dignity to the cause of religion. The sighs of the prisoner had ascended before Him; and the nations would know, that Israel had not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God. At the time appointed the ransomed of the Lord would return to Zion, and Jerusalem be builded upon her own heap; and this work, opposed and impeded, would surmount every obstacle, and arise the ornament and the defence of the Church: *The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

Of the completion of these words, we are largely informed in the books of Scripture. These contain the history of the restoration of the Jews, and of the re-building of Zion; and, at the same time, record those discouraging events which impeded its progress. Now, Jerusalem, you know, was an emblem of the Church. It was the centre of ordinances, of worship, and of communion with God. The family of Jacob, assembled there at the holy solemnities, represented the whole household of faith: and that ancient city prefigured the Jerusalem which is from above, and is the mother of us all. With respect to both, therefore, we may expect a general similarity in the nature of the divine dispensations. In scripture, accordingly, the history of former events is proposed for the instruction and improvement of succeeding ages; judgments, for warning; and mercies, for the hope and consolation of the Church. Viewing these words, then, as written for our admonition, I have laid them before you; not to show their accomplishment in the restoration of the Jews, but to connect them with some of those arrangements of providence which have been, and are still, passing before us.

You know, brethren, that the Lord has been visiting the world, as the avenger of His law. He that dasheth in pieces, has come

up upon the nations ; and justice and judgment have been the habitation of His throne. You are not ignorant of those dreadful convulsions which, in many countries, have burst asunder every social tie. You are every day hearing, and it is our privilege only to hear, of wars, which, for carnage and ruin, have been seldom equalled. A detail of the peaceful avocations of social intercourse, has not, for many years, been the history of nations ; but the vengeful contentings of man with man ; the marches, conflicts, and destruction of armies. Such are the visitations of God, when He pours indignation upon guilty lands : God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood, and measured the earth ; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations ; the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow.

Of the immediate effects of those wars and commotions with which the Lord has been chastising many parts of the world, we know but little ; nor is it possible for us, in present circumstances, to know with accuracy. They only who feel, can estimate the havoc which they make in the happiness of men. From their very nature, however, it may be easily conceived, that they must implant pangs of misery in the breasts of multitudes. Even when conquest and triumph adorn the operations of war, it is fraught with calamities. The very shouts of rejoicing add to its wounds. After them is heard the cry of the widow and fatherless, announcing what war is, and what pains it inflicts. Wasting and desolation attends its steps. It is like a sweeping pestilence to the happiness of men. Though the land before it be like the garden of Eden ; all behind it, is a desolate wilderness. These things have been abundantly felt by many nations in Europe ; and Europe is the principal seat of the Christian Church. Its members, therefore, mingled with the nations, have drunk the same cup, and experienced the adversity of troublous times.

But the Church has been also subjected to troubles peculiar to itself. The apostle Peter, unfolding the events of the last days, had announced the appearance of scoffers, denying and undermining the Christian faith ; and the completion of this prophecy, affording an additional proof of the truth of revelation, has been exemplified before us. The revolutions in Europe at the conclusion of the last century, were connected with an extensive dissemination of the principles of infidelity. At that period also,

various circumstances combined. to give these principles an unusual influence. They were interwoven with what at first seemed to be a dignified vindication of the liberties of men. Besides, they were emblazoned with the glare of a false philosophy ; and under this guise, multitudes ignorant of religion, were allured to embrace them. The specious pretext of regenerating the world, veiled the introduction of designs which destroyed the peace of society, and threatened the destruction of the Christian name. Appearances too, in some parts of the Church, seemed to augur success. Many who knew little of the foundation of their faith, were caught in the toils of sophistry ; and many, entangled in the snares of sin, gladly turned from those holy doctrines which had curbed their vices and interrupted their pleasures. In the meantime, the enemies of religion boasted, that, a few years hence, and Christianity would be known only as a superstition which had once prevailed a great part of the world. These things have befallen the Church ; and they are sure indications of troublous times.

But farther, the Church had experienced a mournful decay of the power of religion. A defection from Christian doctrine is itself a sufficient proof of the decrease of its influence. Christianity, as a system of religion, contains luminous views of its own excellence. In itself amiable and dignified, it embraces the honour of God and the true interests of men ; and the experience of ages has proved its merits. Besides, as a revelation from God, it possesses an operative influence of which no human system can boast. Designed alike to instruct and reform, it has a blessing from above ; by which it expands the intelligence, and, at the same time, secures the affections of the mind. The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, applying its doctrines, produces belief ; and wherever it is really believed, it is loved and practised. It is, therefore, easy to conceive how conviction might reach the mind of an infidel. But, when Christians in name turn to the intricate and dark mazes of infidelity, it must be, because they do not feel the illuminating and benevolent operations of revealed religion.

Accordingly in those nations who profess christianity, various causes had contributed to add to the numbers of the Church ; and, at the same time, to diminish the knowledge of its doctrines and attachment to its duties. In this state, the Church was exposed to the shock of civil commotions and the tumults of war ; and these, too, were connected with speculations in religion, by no

mean  
of me  
Many  
profes  
or pro  
of pa  
for re  
imper  
its flo  
remain

Be  
doctr  
than  
motiv  
Infid  
mind  
good  
who  
practi  
the fl  
remain

Ev  
parat  
erful  
"Th  
glory  
langu  
bers  
amid  
ment  
very  
of re  
Eli,

In  
troub  
which  
the s  
perit  
religi  
prosp

means calculated to increase the piety or animate the devotions of men. The minds of multitudes were eventually unhinged. Many renounced christianity; and not a few, who retained their profession, ceased to be its zealous and affectionate friends. Real or pretended grievances engrossed their attention; the bitterness of party aroused their passions; and, when some were contending for reform, and others opposing innovation, disregard for religion imperceptibly extended its influence. Christianity was stript of its flowers and fruit; and "a name to live," was almost all that remained in many parts of the Church.

Besides, infidelity extended its pernicious influence, where its doctrines were disbelieved. These are more calculated to perplex than to reform. It is their very nature too, to destroy those motives which curb the vices and stimulate the virtues of men. Infidelity, therefore, by leaving the natural propensities of the mind unrestrained, cherished a train of vices, destructive to the good order and peace of society; and members of the Church who opposed its principles, became imperceptibly a prey to its practical influence. Yielding conformity to the world, they quench the flame of ardent and affectionate piety; and "the things which remained, were ready to die."

Even where christianity retained possession of the mind, comparatively few members of the Church, could exult in those powerful and cheering consolations which it has often administered. "The dew and the rain" were withheld from above; and "the glory of Lebanon," and "the excellency of Carmel and Sharon," languished below. In many parts, its sincere and devout members found the path of religion strewn with adversities. Some, amidst the wreck of nations, were torn from every social enjoyment of life; others were assailed by the pangs of infidelity in the very bosom of their families; and many, pondering upon the state of religion in the Church, were "mourners in Zion;" and, like Eli, "trembled for the ark of God."

In these respects, the Church has experienced the adversity of troublous times. Yet these times of trouble are the very period, which an over-ruling Providence has marked out for the revival of the spirit of religion, for the abundant enlargement of the prosperity of Zion. This coincidence illustrates our Lord's care of religion. It shows, also, that, under His administrations, gloomy prospects may introduce a result, honorable to His grace, and



glorious to the Church. Chastisement is a necessary part of religious discipline ; but the divine corrections are mercy ; they are designed to purify and reform ; and, for this reason, the shades of the evening are always the harbinger of "the day spring from on high." This you will learn from the history of the Church. You may observe it also, in that series of events which is passing before us. At a period when the judgments of God had shaken terribly the nations, burst the bands of superstition asunder, and set multitudes free from those ties which mislead the judgment and enslave the passions ; He has aroused the friends of religion, to disseminate its pure and undefiled principles ; and is thus saying to Jerusalem be built, and to the cities of Judah, be ye inhabited.

This, brethren, is a subject upon which, for different reasons, you will ponder with sensations of delight. It addresses itself to every Christian and patriotic principle of the mind. You are not ignorant of the dignified and commanding attitude, in which our native country has appeared among the nations of the world. Britain has been the bulwark of liberty, and the refuge of oppressed nations ; and what British heart does not thrill with pleasure, when his country is receiving the homage of gratitude from emancipated kingdoms. But our native country is invested with honours more transcendent and glorious : it has "a witness in Heaven," and "a record on high." The churches of Britain are the glory of Christ ; and, by divine grace, they have become the centre of a zeal for religion, which is spreading like the torrent, and arousing the activity of men to the very ends of the earth.

Permit me, brethren, to turn your attention to the labours of a nation through whom we possess all that is dear in society, and every consolation which religion affords. Our native country has not been enjoying a season of peaceful prosperity. Contending with tyrants, in the cause of humanity, Britain has endured privations and distresses of no ordinary kind ; and, in the mean time, has sustained a character which commands the admiration of the world. Our brethren at home, amid their own privations, have felt for the miseries of men ; and approved themselves the imitators of a Father who is rich in mercy and ready to relieve. Tried by adversity themselves, they have presented to the world a splendid pattern of diffusive benevolence. In the domestic history of Britain, you will find traits of goodness and peaceful avocations o

mercy, which are seldom exemplified amidst the tumults of war. While one part records the victories of fleets and armies ; another exhibits the formation and progressive execution of plans of universal goodness ; to emancipate men from the servitude of sin, to establish the reign of religion, and to communicate its peaceful consolations even to their foes. An earnest desire to promote these excellent purposes, has pervaded every order in society, and every denomination of Christians. These, united in affection and design, are displaying a beneficence, honourable to themselves and to the Christian name. Their plans, also, are conducted upon principles which are well calculated to produce desirable and permanent effects. Connecting the wisdom with the benevolence of religion, they have concentrated their labours ; and every city and almost every village has its social unions, according with the spirit of the gospel, and tending to promote its important designs.

I cannot pretend to specify at present, the particular nature and uses of these numerous societies. They embrace a variety of objects, and exhibit a diversity of operation ; but, in the reformation and happiness of mankind, they have one common centre : in this great and good work, they all unite and co-operate. Some of these societies are reclaiming the outcasts of the world, and smoothing their return into the paths of virtue. Others are tending the education of those, who, without the means of instruction, were exposed to the ravages of vice and infamy : And others again, by useful publications and a variety of other means, are calling the attention of men to the duties of life, and the important concerns of the eternal state. There are, you know, societies in Britain, zealous for the dissemination of the knowledge of Christ ; and the benevolent activity of these, embraces the whole family of man : Christians and heathen, Jews and Gentiles, are all the objects of their affectionate regard. None of you are ignorant of those societies, whose sole object is the publication of the oracles of truth. This mode of extending the knowledge of religion in purity, is beginning to attract a degree of attention, proportioned to its importance ; those who befriend it, are rapidly encreasing ; and their exertions are giving to the word of life, a publicity unequalled in the annals of the Church. The Lord gave the word, and great is the company of them who publish it.

Whatever be the result of the labours of these societies, the de-

sign is excellent. It embraces the grand ends of human existence, the honour of God and the happiness of men. The means employed for promoting these purposes, also, are such as religion prescribes and experience approves. Ignorance, vice and misery, are links of the same chain. It is, therefore, by a removal of the first, that men cease to become the victims of the last; and these societies are exerting themselves, by a diffusion of the holy principles of the Christian religion, to illuminate the mind and rectify the conduct of men; and by these means, to guide them to happiness pure and eternal: and these principles are the true basis of human felicity; the only principles, which can eradicate the depravity of the mind, harmonize its affections, and by a union of hearts, establish concord and peace in the world. They are the message of Him, who is a light to enlighten the gentiles, and the salvation of God to the ends of the earth; and, sealed by His spirit, all the blessings of religion attend them: As the rain cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give feed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Besides, the social union of Christians is the scriptural plan, for giving success to those means which are employed for promoting religion. Of this, Christianity is itself a pattern; and the history of the Church discovers, that the union of the friends of religion, has usually introduced an extensive diffusion of its power. The dispersed of Jacob might in secret mourn over the long desolations; but, gathered from the nations, their prosperity returned, and Jerusalem arose in her walls and bulwarks. The primitive times of the Church, also, are celebrated for affectionate union among the friends of Christ; and not less, for the splendid triumphs of the gospel over the powers of darkness.

As a rational mode of promoting religion, the social plan recommends itself. In the relations and engagements of life, the importance of union is well understood, and every day experienced. For the same reasons, religion enjoins the unity of its friends, and the consolidation of their activity. These add energy to its operations; and produce extensive and permanent effects, at which no insulated acts of beneficence can grasp; they enable

it to s  
worth  
But th  
nectio  
to me  
or thro  
His b

But  
ample  
tween  
serve  
to poi  
the su

In  
done  
the di  
Every  
taken  
to len  
man.

you w  
portan  
admin  
see, a  
certai  
in tro

Bu  
show  
to pro  
whate  
benev  
perso  
seeds  
of the  
memb  
mote  
pursu  
union  
affect

it to surmount opposition, and to appear with a lustre and dignity, worthy of itself, and calculated to command attention and esteem. But the principal excellence of religious union, consists in its connection with the promise of Christ; a promise, which gives effect to means, and a result glorious to the Church. Even where two or three are assembled in His name, they enjoy His presence, and His blessing attends them.

But, upon this point, it is not necessary to recur to ancient examples. Passing events enable us to trace the connection between Christian unity and the progress of religion; we can observe existing societies and mark their effects. Permit me, then to point out to you a few of those circumstances, which indicate the success of religion in these times of trouble.

In the present state of the world, a great deal remains to be done for the diffusion of Christian doctrine; and this work, under the direction of Christ, is entrusted to the care of His friends. Every person who has felt the power of religion, has also undertaken the charge of this sacred deposit; and is strongly obligated to lend his aid, that the gospel may illuminate the whole family of man. Observing, then, the present state of religion in the Church, you will find an encreasing zeal for the performance of this important part of practical Christianity. Growing multitudes are administering to the world those means, by which all men may see, and know, and rejoice together in the goodness of God: And, certainly, this is itself an evident proof of the progress of religion in troublous times.

But farther, an attentive view of the operation of this duty, will show you a number of circumstances arising out of it, which tend to promote the interests of religion. It will be always found that whatever flows from a religious principle, adds to its energy. The benevolent operations of the mind re-act upon itself; so that those persons who do good, are themselves the gainers: sowing the seeds of religion in the world, they participate the fruits and joys of the harvest. Such a result, then, may be expected among the members of those societies who are exerting themselves to promote this important purpose. Indeed, the very nature of their pursuit, encourages congenial sentiments and conduct. Their union, also, introduces Christian conversation, acquaintance, and affection; and these are invigorating means for promoting ani-

mation and activity in the paths of religion : As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man, his friend.

It is to be remembered too, that, as these means are appointed for producing habits of religion in the mind, they are connected with that divine blessing which secures their efficacy. Besides, those whose labours terminate in the honour of God and the happiness of men ; who behold the Lord, by their means, speaking peace to the nations, and sinners bowing before the sceptre of mercy, must enjoy sensations more delightful than all the pleasures of the tents of sin. Members of those societies have accordingly published to the world, that their satisfaction in this great and good work, is such as religion alone can communicate ; such joy and peace, as the spirit of promise descending from above, diffuses in the habitations of Jacob : and the truth of this testimony is proved by their encreasing zeal and activity. These are proofs of their own progress in the duties and consolations of religion ; and they exemplify the rebuilding of Zion in troublous times.

Again, you will farther perceive, that, by the same means, Christian affection and zeal are pervading the Church. The power of religion is gradually breaking down those barriers which have long separated its friends. Those whom the influence of party and its unchristian spirit, had robbed of the benevolence of the gospel, are beginning to manifest that mutual affection, which becomes Christianity. As one family of love, they are drawing more closely together ; and their united labours illustrate the nature of the principles by which they are animated. A view of the present state of those societies which have been formed for the advancement of religion, will show you what affection and zeal are growing among Christians. Every day affords them an encrease of numbers, and of the means of doing good. Their benevolent labours are attracting general attention ; and many in almost every part of the Church, by cordial co-operation, or by the formation of other societies equally benevolent, are manifesting a union of hearts, and a zeal for religion which knows no exceptions in the whole family of man, and no limits but the ends of the earth.

These dispositions are evidences of the power and progress of religion ; for, when the disciples of Christ are of one heart and one mind, He builds up His Church and appears in His glory. It is the established order of religion, that the revival of its spirit in the commonwealth of Israel, precedes the enlargement of the border

of Zion  
Church  
He shall  
have  
of the

From  
the re  
world  
such  
with  
conse  
Church  
deser  
terest  
ligion  
ation  
certai  
partia  
every  
shalt  
be en  
unto

Su  
influe  
virtue  
pract  
point  
miser

Bu  
also f  
nevol  
tianit  
natur  
to en  
sult.  
those  
day o  
the C  
fied in

of Zion: The benign influences of the spirit are poured upon the Church; and then the reign of religion extends upon every side: He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

From this state of religion in the Church, we naturally turn to the result of the exertions of these societies with respect to the world. The means which they are using to promote religion, are such as itself prescribes; and, therefore, connected as they are with the blessing of God, they will ultimately produce beneficial consequences: sent abroad into the world, they will return to the Church, loaded with the spoils of the nations. It is a circumstance deserving attention, that this affectionate concern for the best interests of men, has its centre in Britain; where the friends of religion, sharing the dominion of the seas, can extend their operations to almost every part of the world. The Church, then has certainly reason to exult in the divine promise; and, from this partial accomplishment, to expect a consummation which will place every kindred and people under the authority of Christ: Then shalt thou see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

Such associations, from their very nature, must possess a moral influence upon the conduct of society. Classed upon the side of virtue, their example and labours tend alike to discourage the practice of vice and to prevent its encroachments; so that, in this point of view, they must have already diminished the crimes and miseries of men.

But beside the diminution of evil, much good, it is evident, has also flowed from their exertions. They have exemplified the benevolent nature of the Christian religion; and a pattern of Christianity is a fruitful recommendation of its principles. From its nature it is calculated both to reach conviction to the mind, and to engage its affections; and it is rarely without a congenial result. For these reasons, it is enjoined in scripture, as one of those means by which persons are induced to glorify God in the day of visitation; and, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude, that the Christian benevolence of these societies has not been exemplified in vain.

Besides, their exertions have conferred upon the world, benefits which must produce permanent effects. To many distant and dark places of the earth they have imparted the ordinances of salvation. By their means, the gospel has been continued among Christians, and published to the heathen; and the oracles of truth are so extensively diffused, that the word of the Lord is running down like water.

But much of the good which they have done, must yet be veiled from the Church. The progress of religion is often silent and secret; and a life of genuine piety, like the flower of the desert, is often sequestered from the observation of men. Doubtless; many who, by their means, have experienced the power of divine grace, are not known as the fruit of their labours; and perhaps may never be recognised, till they be found in the family of God, encircling the throne of the Majesty on high, and, in triumphant halleluias, exalting His praise. Still the Church is not without proofs, that religion is extending its power. In the mass of corruption which pervades the world, the result, indeed, is yet like the handful of corn upon the top of the mountains, comparatively few, and overlooked among the myriads of mankind. Yet those who have been already restored to religion, collected from the nations, will add to the honour of Christ, and to the countless multitudes of the redeemed in glory. Many have already honourably avowed, that, to the benevolent exertions of these societies, they owe all that is valuable to man: and, from the dreary regions of the north and the deserts of the south, the tribute of grateful acknowledgment has been returned to the Church.

These circumstances indicate the progress of the work of mercy. Connected with the promises of God to the Church, they afford such societies, cheering motives to prosecute their labours. Perseverance with the blessing from above, will fortify the towers and enlarge the border of Zion; and the Church, yet feeble as the corn and small as a handful, shall shake like Lebanon, and swell into a numberless multitude like the grass of the earth. Such glorious things are spoken of the city of God; and labours like these will introduce their accomplishment. They will harmonize the affections of men, unite the nations in one family of love, and establish the reign of universal goodness. Benevolence shall pervade the hearts, and peace encircle the habitations, of men: Nation shall not lift up the sword against Nation, nor learn war any more.

Certa  
orname  
alted an  
in the a  
pared to  
rived fr  
religion  
tstrength  
firmame  
forever  
In th  
observe  
dant pr  
desired  
which h  
pieces r  
of the c  
bute to  
tion; an  
of love  
O Jerus  
the bars  
Nor c  
dispens  
called f  
and zea  
ardent c  
for the  
tress, th  
his nam  
every Is  
our adm  
our frie  
and este  
With  
what is  
Israel;  
hopes a  
prosperi  
get her  
those tu

Certainly, such societies, wherever they are, are the honour and ornament of the Christian name. They sustain a character, exalted and amiable; and their labours of benevolence are recorded in the annals of endless duration: And what honour can be compared to a name dignified by love to the gospel? A fame derived from the world, is unstable as its source: but he who is religion's friend, is like the sun when he goeth fourth in his strength: They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

In this short view of the present state of the church, you will observe much to admire, and much to imitate. It contains abundant proofs of the kindness of the Lord who has chosen Zion and desired it for his habitation. In the midst of tumult and disorder, which have overturned the thrones of the mighty, and dashed in pieces many powerful nations, he has been the defence and safety of the church: he has even made these times of trouble contribute to the success of the gospel. These events claim our attention; and, while we ponder upon the goodness of God, sentiments of love and gratitude ought to arise in our hearts: Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion: For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

Nor ought we to overlook those means by which our Lord is dispensing his grace for the enlargement of the church. He has called for the labours of his friends; and you see what alacrity and zeal are displayed by multitudes; what love to religion, what ardent desire for the happiness of men, what cheerful exertions for the prosperity of Zion. Even in times of privation and distress, they have consecrated gifts and offerings to the honour of his name. Such benevolence addresses itself to the feelings of every Israelite indeed; and those who exercise it, justly deserve our admiration and esteem. As the friends of religion they are our friends. If we love religion, we will reverence their labours, and esteem them very highly for their work's sake.

With such a glorious example before us, let us also remember what is due from us. We are a part of the commonwealth of Israel; we share its immunities; we have an interest in all its hopes and consolations; and, certainly it becomes us to seek its prosperity: If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. The kindness of God has yet exempted us from those tumults and distress which many nations have felt. We



enjoy the fruit of our labours, and all the comforts of social intercourse ; and, when we assemble as brethren in the house of God, there are none to make us afraid. With hearts, therefore, overflowing with gratitude, it becomes us to turn with feelings of sympathy to those who are destitute of such desirable attainments, and to add to those means, by which they also may participate the comforts of life and the peaceful consolations of mercy.

This is a duty which we owe to Christ and his church, and to the whole family of man. He has done much for our fallen race; and he requires us to imitate his benevolence, to exemplify that diffusive goodness which is the glory of the gospel. Multitudes there are, perishing in the paths of vice ; many bowed down by adversity ; myriads who have never been visited by "the day-spring from on high : " And we are able to assist in that work which will make righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations. Let us, then, join the friends of religion in this labour of love. The work is honourable ; and, with the divine blessing, the result will be glorious ; Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field : And the work of righteousness shall be peace ; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever : For the Lord will comfort Zion : He will comfort all her waste places ; and He will make the place like Eden ; and her desert like the garden of God ; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion ; built thou the walls of Jerusalem.

of social in-  
the house of  
ts, therefore,  
feelings of  
attainments,  
participate  
mercy.  
rch, and to  
fallen race;  
mply that  
Multitudes  
d down by  
"the day-  
that work  
orth before  
ion in this  
the divine  
shall dwell  
itful field:  
the effect of  
the Lord will  
; and Pe  
e garden of  
giving and  
u the walls

