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ART. I.—*The Matter of Prophecy.*

THE likeness of the prophets to Moses, and their position in the old economy, determine the task with which they were charged. This was to maintain in its integrity the covenant relation of the people to God, and so to conduct and superintend that relation that it might work out the grand end of its institution, a preparation for the coming of Christ. Hence every thing is viewed by them in its bearings upon that fundamental covenant. It is theirs to develope to the understanding of the people their obligations and privileges arising out of their special relation to God, the fatal consequences which would ensue from its abandonment or neglect, and the glorious issue which God designed to effect for them and for the world by means of it. As they were the authorized expounders of the purposes of God touching a plan still in progress, their communications largely concerned events which were yet future. It was given to them to anticipate the further unfoldings of the divine plan of grace, and to announce what the Most High had in store for Israel and for the world.

The predictions of the prophets are of course qualified and shaped by their grand aim as just exhibited. They are consequently not anticipations of future events selected at random,

permanent wants, or what is requisite to its highest stability, dignity, and efficiency, when these wants are duly understood.

If Presbyterian colleges decline, Presbyterian seminaries must suffer a consequent depression. And not only so, sound Christian education, the interests of learning, religion, the church, at least the Presbyterian branch of it, are involved in such a catastrophe—which may God give the stewards of his bounty the wise and seasonable liberality to avert. We are confident that, when they understand the emergency, they will meet it.

No American institutions have shown a greater tenacity of life than our leading Christian colleges. No benefactions have more enduring vitality and usefulness than gifts for their adequate endowment. Few charities are more effective for good than those devoted to the founding, furnishing, and endowing of first class Christian colleges and theological seminaries.

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ART. V.—*Christian Enterprise.*

THAT it is the Most High who worketh his will among the inhabitants of earth, as well as in the hosts of heaven, is a truth which lies at the foundation of all right understanding of human life; but, though subordinate thereto, not less important in its place, is that other great principle whereby the will of God is, in human things, accomplished through the free action of man. There is a reliance upon God which consists in waiting, and sometimes it is our duty to stand still and keep silence; but in the main, that which is exacted of man is the reliance of an enterprising spirit—that trust in God which goes forward; which, in its best degrees, is fertile in resources, and deviseth its own way, while looking to the Lord to direct its steps.

This is the peculiarity of man's position on the earth. He is made like God, in a degree; and though fallen from the holiness and dignity of that estate, he is still bound by the duties

which belong to it. He is the free agent of this world, and its ruler, the will, the purpose, and the power, whereby its materials ought to be converted to the glory of the Creator. In order to do so, man has first to convert those materials to his own use. Holy men would have effected both ends in one; sinful men forget that there is any use to be considered other than their own; converted men, in coming to a sight of that error, frequently reject, with undue disparagement, the pushing enterprise whereby men of worldly business subdue the materials of earth to their command. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world; but its subjects are men, who are to be brought into it in the use of human effort; and the glory of God and the happiness of his people are connected, by his own ordination, with their intelligent labours. In times when the church enjoys peace, and her organization is permitted to work without interruption, there is a tendency to indulge sloth, and even in labour to become contented with routine. Such languor has always proved fatal to spirituality. By the order instituted of God, the healthy condition of the church is made to depend upon the energy and cordiality with which she puts forth effort to enlarge the number of those who shall be saved. We may say truly, that activity is not a fair measure of piety in a church; and yet, where there is no activity in pressing the conquests of the gospel, the state of religion will be found to lack in genial Christian warmth. No church can long survive in such a condition. It either sinks through descending grades of moderatism and rationalism into infidelity, or is roused to activity by some intervention of Divine Providence, merciful even if severe; as lands which have long refused their moisture to the sky receive no returns of refreshing rain, and either become a parched and barren wilderness, or are saved by a convulsion of nature in the tornado or the thunder-storm. As freely as we have received are we commanded freely to give; and the gift is one which, when given, becomes to the giver a richer possession than before. A primary duty resting upon every Christian, according to the talents given him, and the circumstances in which he is placed, is enterprise in the work of God.

As in every other subject involving human action, there is in

this a right and a wrong—a true and a false; and if “there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,” it is also true, that few discriminate the rise and direction of the tide, and that the multitude are moved in the management of their affairs more by blind likings and dislikings, and certain incidental superficial circumstances. Well for the world that such have been made by the Creator to serve largely the purpose of instructive guides in the choice of labour.

The intellectual and spiritual man is a structure raised upon an animal basis, and, where the former is neglected, the latter will still sustain the fundamental operations of life. Blind likings may be called only a higher kind of instinct. Enterprise is the action of intellect in rising superior to their leading. But to forsake the instinctive would evince little wisdom, could we not lay hold upon some higher guide. If the mariner now ventures out to sea far beyond the leadings of the coast, it is not because he is more reckless than those of ancient times, but because he has transferred his trust from earth to heaven, and found a safer and ubiquitous guide in the action of the magnet and revolution of the spheres. Blind risking is far less respectable than blind following of some well established authority. Experiments have not unfrequently to be made, but they should always be approached in the light of knowledge.

So large an amount of enterprise has been laid out in the pursuits of ambition and of pecuniary gain, that its own reputation has been injured by the contact. In this, we ought to bear in mind that it has only suffered the common calamity of all the faculties of fallen man. That element of our nature, which devises new effort, which boldly enters upon the unexplored, unfolds the hitherto concealed, or cultivates what lies beyond the ordinary routine, is surely not unworthy of a place among those studies pertaining to the work of God.

Intelligent enterprise is the power whereby events become human. The current of the divinely instituted operations of nature is ever flowing on, whether we touch it or not. Seasons run their never-ceasing round, vegetation goes regularly through its various stages, animal life steadily obeys the

laws of its nature. Good and evil, pain and pleasure, occur and succeed each other according to an order no less inflexible. Day and night, heat and cold, and the ten thousand conjunctions of all these things furnish the circumstances of human life, which lie beyond the power of human genius to create. But in the midst of all has God placed man, and enabled and invited him to take part with himself in ruling them. The external world consists of agencies put in motion and kept in motion by God. Man is called upon to avail himself thereof to accomplish the peculiar work to which he is assigned. If he takes hold of those agencies and directs them to the effecting of his designs, or lays his plans to meet and receive the effect of their action, then do they become in some degree his ministers, and their effects expressive of him. If he does not, they go on according to their own laws, and have nothing human about them. If man, instead of controlling and directing, merely follows them, they do not express him; he sinks down and loses himself in them.

Plants grow wild, and bear their fruit in the woods without culture. Savage men live upon that fruit where they find it, and lodge in caverns ready made by geological process. As far as they are concerned, earth receives no impress of human character. Man thus fails to adopt the lead of inanimate things, loses himself in nature, in the routine of vegetation, of vital and mechanical forces.

A cultivated farm, on the contrary, is not a mere expression of the process of nature. It speaks also of man. Though he has not created a single one of the laws operating in it, he has put his hand to them all, in the way of directing, or of preparing proper objects for their action. He can neither create a tree nor the fertile juices of the soil, but by fostering both, and addressing the action of the one to the other, he obtains a fruit as much superior to its native kind as if it were a new creation. That improved fruit is not only addressed to human wants, it also bears the impress of human ingenuity and labour. Nothing about the wild buffalo implies the existence of man. It is otherwise with the ox trained to the yoke, or fattened for the shambles. The natural landscape has nothing to tell of

man, until art has disposed its elements in accordance with human design.

It is thus alone that the material earth on which we live becomes ours, in the sense of improving for our comfort, and conforming to our tastes. The changes that take place among a community of ignorant and barbarous tribes, are, to a great extent, untrained nature. In common language, such people are said to take things as they come; that is, the very circumstances of their own lives are but partially human. Should we all thoroughly carry out the principle of taking things as they come, there would be no more of human nature left upon the track of our existence than wild animals leave of theirs. We should, in fact, have no history. Nature would recognise no allegiance to us.

It is possible to live too exclusively in art, and to force too great a change upon nature. We advocate neither extreme. But the true position of man is among the arts of his own framing. It is the coöperation of the human will with the divine, the enterprise of the human spirit, in accordance with the divinely constituted order, which alone gives a human character to the place of our abode, and the circumstances of our being.

If any are at a loss to distinguish between legitimate enterprise and blind rashness, the method, however difficult it may sometimes be in practice, is abundantly clear to the understanding.

As the world has been made and set in operation for us, with all its machinery in perfect order, it is obvious that enterprise has nothing to do with the creation of material, or of principles of action. We can only turn them to our own account. The rules and guide must be the operation of natural law. We have to govern, as far as we do govern, by obeying, and conquer by submission. To dash into an undertaking, without due consideration of the laws involved, is to commit success to the mere accident of coinciding therewith or not. The most prudent are not unfrequently constrained to act in ignorance of some principle involved; but one who gives, habitually, little heed to that consideration, lives the life of a gambler, if presuming beyond imitation or his instincts.

Legitimate enterprise seizes upon and coöperates with the laws of human nature and the material world, considers how they will serve its ends, and seeks the channel whereby they may most briefly and surely be followed up thereto; never adopts a measure until that question is settled; but then nothing can impede its progress, nor, if the question is rightly answered, prevent its ultimate success. The matter is not one of accident, but of reliance upon the constituted order of the Creator. Intelligent enterprise always seeks to explore its way with all practicable accuracy; running the risk indolently, dares the unknown by a leap in the dark.

It is certainly not easy to master the complicated working of the vast machine of which we are ourselves a part; but a mind well trained to discriminate, need not often err within the bounds of a profession. At all events, such is the range admitted to individual enterprise beyond the points established by previous experience. And the difference between a rash and giddy innovator and a real reformer, or enlarger of the bounds of human knowledge and happiness, is, that the former neglects, and the latter duly and reverently considers the bearing of the divine law, and adapts his measures thereto.

The first step towards prosecuting the proper work of men is to recognise that the Most High ruleth, and that every law under which we meet the forces of nature, and every effective means we have to employ, is his: and secondly, that we are workmen, not machines made to operate after an invariable manner. To apprehend ourselves co-labourers with God, by himself so constituted, is a source of confidence in enterprise, and of reverence without timidity. Such a fortifying and benign sense of his presence sanctions labour, both in modifying his works to human design, and in accepting the service of unchanging laws.

Things which pertain to the whole system of nature, and are indispensable to its completeness, as gravitation, revolution of the earth, the seasons, and the weather, are all beyond our control. What can be divided and treated in different ways, in different parts, without detriment to the whole, as in the case of vegetation and animal life, is within our power to modify

or to destroy, but not to create or restore. Results of combining and of segregation are ours entirely to make, to mend, to mar, or to destroy. The inanimate materials of our globe are subject to our will, to the extent of their capacity. Wood and earth and stone take the shapes, and submit to the purposes of man, to all the capacity of wood and earth and stone. The surface of the earth and all its vegetable productions, submit to be modified, and the soil to be enriched or impoverished, in some degree to be made or unmade, by the industry of man.

Thus we are surrounded by a system over which we have no control, something we can modify, and a little field is submitted to our sway. But by a prudent use of what we can command, we may also take advantage of the inflexible order which nature has reserved. Unable to change the law of gravitation, or to prevent water from obeying it, we may, by the interposition of a wheel, turn the action of both to our account. And the unalterableness of the one class of things is no less indispensable to the effect of enterprise, than is the manageability of the other. The former furnish ground of confidence in the effects of certain efforts, and a right estimate of our power among them decides whether or not the effort can be made. That the spring comes always in spring-time, and acts always in the same way, and that no man or nation of men can prevent it, is the ground of confidence that it will continue to come, and that seeds properly subjected to the soil at that season will germinate. And just because the matter is beyond human control have we confidence in it.

How, then, shall one predict whether a given end is attainable or not, if no experience has proved it? Intelligent enterprise would first inquire if there is any natural law operating in that direction. If so, the path is plain as that of a railroad by the banks of a tranquil stream. If not, he would look for some other law, which may indirectly serve his purpose, as the mariner takes the oblique winds into his sails in such a way as to propel his vessel in the desired course. And even should that be unavailable, he would inquire if two or more series of natural actions could not be found somewhere, to converge upon the given end, as it requires both the adverse elements of heat and moisture to effect the ends of vegetation. Still, should the



answer he receives be nay, his project may be practicable, if only two or more effects of existing laws be made to approximate thereto; as in civil government the perfection of the end desired has never been attained, yet who shall say that all government is a failure? Thus by laying his plans to encounter the effects of nature in one or other of these ways, one may predict, with greater or less accuracy, the amount of his success, and secure the means thereof.

Where human will is concerned, precision is not always within command, and more frequently the approximate result alone is probable. All men are not the same in the same circumstances, nor is their action the same; and yet there is much in any given circumstances which will affect all men similarly. And the similarity of human action in given circumstances, is greater in the case of masses than of individuals; so that in proportion to the largeness and promiscuousness of the body concerned will be the probability of a given result. In the case of one man, whose character is unknown to us, it may be so doubtful that we can affirm nothing; in that of a large assembly the probability may be very strong; while in that of a nation it may amount to a certainty. It is proposed to an individual to subject himself to a system of rules of his own adoption; without particular acquaintance with him, we could not assert that he would or would not. If the same proposal were made to a large assembly, it would most likely comply, and bind itself to order. But in the case of a nation, it would be an action beyond all doubt.

Should we hear, for the first time, of a civilized country, we know at once that it has a religion; that it has a civil government, and a judiciary, and that it practises various arts of industry and refinement, many of which we can name without hesitation. But of an unknown individual, although told that he is a civilized man, we could not equally assert that he professes any religion, or that he has voluntarily subjected himself to any system of rules, moral or otherwise, or that he practises any art or profession.

While individual man is free, and actuated by motives, from within himself, which are sometimes peculiar to himself, the race, as a whole, is working out the purposes of God with all

the precision of inanimate nature. The more largely that we group mankind, the more nearly do we approach to that unchangeable law to which the whole race, notwithstanding its mixture of evil with good, is steadily made to conform. Man, the individual, may choose not to comply with some of the divine commands, because, to some extent, he is conscious and free; man, the race, executes the purposes of his creation, because, although he has no design to that end, he is controlled by a stronger law. The character of individual man varies endlessly; that of man, the race, is as well defined as the properties of a given curve.

The human race is conscious of no design in common, never knows the bearing of the work it executes—a secret hidden from the wisest of its members until the work is done. Yet the records of nations demonstrate a perfect consistency of cause and effect in a course of ever-unfolding progression. In this respect our race approaches to the nature of inanimate things. Classes may be computed with the accuracy of arithmetic, while the incidents befalling individuals are frequently such as to baffle conjecture.

Upon this platform of universal and unchanging law the whole race stands firmly, and individual enterprise possesses a footing which cannot fail. God has planted our feet upon a rock. He has surrounded us by material causes, which are so regular that they can be foretold by computation, in the midst of agencies which go on of themselves, yet are subject to our direction, and of new elements ever proceeding from his own creative power, and under a moral government, of which the operation is no less regular, though fitting more closely to the windings of our will. Consequently, many future effects may be approximately estimated by each of us in the line of our particular labour. And the first step to that end is so to study them, in their past and present action, as to be able rightly to estimate the invariable element.

Such is the law of intelligent enterprise. It is no haphazard, reckless daring, after the gambler's proverb, "Never venture, never win;" but a clear computation of circumstances, upon the basis of the divinely constituted order, guiding the steps of energetic action. It implies a discriminative study of

the laws of God in the case, compliance with them, and trust in them. To this spirit is the world indebted for all that human hands have done to render life refined and happy. And the demands upon it accumulate as time proceeds. In civil government, new exigencies are ever arising. Men who can only follow the footsteps of a predecessor, are not the rulers who have governed well, or blessed a nation with wise and equal laws.

It is this practical reliance upon established principles, in cases where their working has not been previously tested, that has been the pioneer to all the great discoveries of science. It guides the lonely student to explore, with excited but confident nerve, realms of investigation where no footprint of earlier knowledge leads the way. The power of rapidly and justly estimating the capacities of human action and endurance, the effect of arms, and the ever-varying contingencies of flood and field, is the first requisite of a successful general. A soldier may know every thing else in his profession, but without this element of enterprise he is incompetent to general command in actual warfare. To lead soldiers into places of danger, in mere reliance upon their ability to maintain themselves, may illustrate the bravery of the men, but the incapacity of the officer. The command which sent the six hundred into battle at Balaklava was reckless stupidity, issuing in the loss of brave men without any corresponding advantage. He who waited to think, before he rushed upon the guns of Island Number Ten, finished his thinking by the capture of the whole force of his enemy, while himself lost not a man. Without enterprise, a merchant may get along in a plain way, following the lead of the most urgent demand, if he does not wait too long to find it out; but he is not likely to be one of the princes. He alone, who, looking through and along the operation of natural causes, anticipates the demand, and provides for it, ere it comes, is the man to secure the cream of the market.

There is danger, one may say, connected with this restless inquiry and innovation. True, there is. And so there is in life. The dead are harmless. Yet life is generally preferred. Mistakes will be fewer, if men rightly and practically recognise

the natural principles by the operation of which their ends are to be attained.

A man pressing forward in pursuit of some great and untried result, laboriously removing obstacle after obstacle, despising the ridicule of men, and encountering unforeseen impediments with firm perseverance, year after year, until his purpose is complete, and the world beholds as a fact, what it had ridiculed as a chimera, is a legitimate object of admiration, but the only thing in which he differs from the visionary, or the empiric, is in his practical handling of the laws, the effects of which he seeks. With confidence in the institutions of a Creator, who never deceives, one may well afford to despise the sneers of men, and go forward. Copernicus could wait for a generation that should understand his discoveries. Newton and La Place might well be content with one reader in a nation; and George Stephenson seemed to foresee, with the eye of a prophet, and the joy of a triumph already secured, his native country lined with railroads and his locomotives sweeping along the valleys, long before the vision had appeared to any other, and years before the public had ceased resisting him as a madman. Madame Daguerre, it is said, actually applied to a celebrated chemist for his opinion of the possibility of taking pictures by sunbeams, as her poor husband was haunted by such a fancy, which she dreaded as a symptom of insanity. Why did M. Daguerre, though treated as a visionary, and suspected of hallucination by her who was the fullest confident of his hopes, still pursue his studies, without discouragement, or relaxation? He knew the elements he handled, and that he had only to remove obstacles, which he conceived from the nature of things to be removable, in order to attain the result which he desired. An intelligent series of questions addressed to Nature was guiding him on the way. He could afford to bear with sneers, or even the suspicion of an intellect obscured. The time was to come, when he should subscribe his name in light. When a man has taken hold of, and is consistently following out or applying some principle of nature, he may well meet ridicule with tranquillity, and courageously resist all the impediments which stolidity can interpose.

But now let us lift this spirit to a higher sphere, and behold

it baptized into the service of the gospel of God. It now receives a double guaranty of success, while the objects are nobler to which it aspires.

Christian enterprise is favoured above all others, in the most important respects. For, whereas the merchant and philosopher, the soldier and ruler, as such, taking nature for their guide, must discover, before they can apply the laws in question, or at least have many a point to settle, in respect to applicability, or otherwise, of every principle they employ; the Christian possesses a code of law distinctly revealed, as the rule of his conduct in all cases, and lying beyond question of correctness. He may have difficulty in carrying out its precepts, and not unfrequently much prudence and courage may be needed so to do, but the law, in which obedience works invariable success, has been made plain, once for all, by the Master whom he serves. In addition to all that he has access to, in common with men of the world, he possesses another class of resources—of powers—in his knowledge and experience as a Christian.

Another advantage on the side of Christian enterprise is coöperation. Worldly men labour for themselves. To them there are as many centres and ends of effort as there are individual men of enterprise, except in so far as they formally combine for the attainment of some common end; but these combinations are always limited in respect to persons, time, and object. Each man generally seeks only his profit in them, and abandons them if they fail to subserve that purpose. He whose efforts are to terminate in himself, can seldom enjoy the hearty coöperation of others. Division of purpose breaks up their projects into a multitude of narrow circles, like the rain drops on the surface of the waters. All true Christians belong to one society, of one spirit, one sentiment, and one purpose. All true Christian effort contemplates the same end. The workmen may employ different tools, may address themselves to execution in different ways, but the object of all is one. Of the thousands employed upon Solomon's temple, some wrought in laying the polished stones, some in preparing the furniture, some in overseeing the design, some in carrying the material; others were far away in the quarries, or hewing the timber on

Lebanon: but all their varied employments terminated in the great and beautiful building which arose on Mount Moriah. Such is the coöperation of effort which sustains the labours of every labourer in the kingdom of Christ.

Again, but for the overruling providence of God, Mr. World-wiseman would leave no effects behind him, or those of the most fleeting nature; and his own ungodly designs are always failures, in many cases manifesting themselves as such to his own eyes. But enterprises conducted for the glory of God, and in accordance with his commands, never fail of an immortal value; for they are formed in the line, and fall into the current, of the Almighty decrees.

The vastest dominion ever achieved by victorious arms is pitifully small in comparison with the power and grandeur of the humblest province in the kingdom of Christ. Behold that kingdom, establishing itself among resisting men, from the beginning of their resistance through successive centuries! Listen to the promise of prophecy, that it shall eventuate in the blessedness of multitudes which no man can number, rescued out of every country, and tribe, and nation. Does it move men to deeds of enterprise, to feel themselves part of a great nation, and subserving its renown and strength? It is well. They partake of the noble position of their native land, and her honour is really a worthy motive of effort to them. He must be lacking in one of the better traits of human nature who does not feel some prompting to noble deeds therefrom. There is an advantage in being of a great nation rather than of an insignificant country. It is something to have nativity in Athens rather than in Seriphos. But if such is a proper stimulus to enterprise, what ought citizenship in the kingdom of Christ to be? The Russian has apology for exultation, when he points to the possessions of his monarch, covering with a broad belt the whole north of Europe and Asia, and reaching deep into the heart of both; there are associations with the long historic career and beautiful land of France, which must be inspiring to a noble and enterprising spirit born to the inheritance of her renown; and dull must be that native of the British isles, who is not moved by some sense of the great events of their history, and the breadth of that empire,

moral and material, which God has given them, and which even apparent misfortunes have conspired to enlarge and fortify; and the American who feels not pleasure in the rank, dominion, and prosperity of his country, must be strangely perverted from the better standard of mankind. But what is all the breadth of this great land we occupy, of France, of England, and of Russia, in comparison with the kingdom of Christ? and what the events of their history, as compared with those which mark the progress of the work of our Lord? If a place in any of those great nations is a motive to exertion, what ought citizenship in the kingdom of heaven to be? Have we not a right to rejoice in it—to think much of it—to seek to connect our names with its glory, and our enterprise with its progress? Its true subjects have, in all ages, been cheered and carried forward by this idea. They have seen that, notwithstanding temporary appearances, the cause of their Sovereign is the greatest and most prosperous under heaven. Pride and ambition inspire too often the patriotism of the world; the bond and inspiration of Christ's kingdom is pure and self-sacrificing love, and to that emotion are its rewards addressed. And far as the love of Christ is elevated above the love of self, of kindred, or of country, so is the Christian motive to enterprise the nobler and more cogent.

Sanctified enterprise has been blessed of God to the accomplishment of the greatest and most benign changes upon society. Since the last surviving apostle departed from time, the greatest benefactors of mankind have been those people of God, who, keeping nearest to their Master, have explored with most original inquiry the treasures of his word, and the ways of his providence and grace, and have laboured to bring their own lives and the lives of others into conformity thereto. In the midst of the church's desolation, in the days of her darkness and bondage, and when the culture of society had sunk equally low, it was the pious, of earnest convictions and holy enterprise, here and there scattered over the scene, that alone relieved its dreariness. We dwell with interest upon the holy daring, the suffering, and achievements of Anshar, the far-reaching influences established in the schools of Gerard Groot, and the tale of the stirring eloquence of the mystics, warm

from their perhaps too imaginative, but intense meditation upon God. And the humble pastor, who, truly devoted to his sacred duties, sought to learn of them from the word of God, belonged to the class who did most to prepare the way for the higher civilization to come.

It was the enterprise of Wyckliffe which broke over the bounds of an enforced formality and opened up the approaches to the modern world. What enterprise more earnest and daring than that of Luther, always guided by prudent forecast of the future effects of present action, in ardent reliance upon the grace of God. Such was the spirit of the Reformation throughout, and has been the spirit of every true reformation since. When the Protestant churches had secured their independence, and were freed from the fight of persecution, and from the necessity of daring in order to maintain their existence, they sank into indolence, as if their work had been done, and all that remained was to enjoy their peace. They soon suffered the penalty in a spiritual torpor, and the growth of a rationalism that threatened death to true religion. A terrific convulsion, which shook all Europe and disclosed the abyss over which religion had been suspended, was needed to rouse them from their indolence in formalism. On the other hand, as churches have bestirred themselves and put forth their energies for the promotion of the gospel, we have seen them blessed by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit among them.

God calls for our energies, for our progress in knowledge, and righteousness, and the exercise of ingenuity, invention, every faculty, in his service; and grants his grace according as that service is rendered.

On a large scale has this truth been illustrated, in the spiritual prosperity of the enterprising early church, in the cold worldly-mindedness which befell it when settled in security as the state religion, in the great revival which constituted the Reformation, in the lethargy which succeeded, and in the revivals of more recent times. Nor is the realm of Christian enterprise exhausted now. Earlier times had obstacles to contend with. The avenues to work were obstructed, and the principal authorities of the church and of the world expressed themselves in prohibition. Many of those obstacles are now



removed, and the state of the world generally is that of invitation to labour for advancement of the gospel and melioration of society. We have now free access to the proper task. But its magnitude is only dawning upon us, as the nations open their portals to welcome the messenger of salvation, and as enterprise proceeds in ascertaining the wants of Christian countries, and encounters the invading hosts of iniquity, ever changing their strategy and calling forth new devices to repel them. Never was there a time more exacting of intellectual resources in the services of the Lord than now. The cause of Christ ramifies endlessly. It has work for every kind of ability. And none can make the plea that there is no place of enterprise for him. Any subject will brighten up and yield new wealth of thought to him who turns all the acumen of his intellect upon it. And ideas wrought out by a man's own industry give peculiar energy and power to execution. For such it is not necessary to go far away. Every servant of Christ, as such, possesses a mine in his own avocation. In general, it is in the line of a man's business that his way to discovery lies most open and direct; and the closer we come to the life and motives of the individual man, the richer the materials, and the greater the variety for the handling of enterprise. The mechanic in his trade, the farmer on his farm, the teacher among his pupils, and the minister in his congregation, has the best soil for his labour, and by far more likely to be productive to him than any more distant or speculative field. It is more likely to be productive, because plain fact, humble as it looks, is the only thing in nature which is really generative of results endlessly new. Speculation promises much, but performs little. It is the most attractive at first sight, and when we speak of enterprise in the realms of thought, the idea of philosophic theories, and of some gigantic effort of intuition, generally arises. But the round of speculative philosophy is quickly run, and the student finds himself returning upon the same circle. Free and boundless as it seems, such philosophy is positively limited to a very narrow range. The human mind launches out freely, feels no restraint, yet walks in a certain round, and stops at a certain boundary, as surely as if it were confined in a cage; as the plant, which grows in the open air, springs up from the

shoot, throws out its branches, and multiplies its leaves, in the perfect freedom of its vital energies, yet assumes a determinate shape, and stops at a particular time, as certainly as if it were compressed by mould. Unenriched by the teaching of simple facts, the most elaborate efforts of human thinking present a wearisome sameness. They are like the fluttering of a bird, not within a cage, but within the limits of the atmosphere, beyond which it cannot live, and has no instinct or capacity to soar. The speculative conclusions of Egypt are reproduced in those of India, in a more artistic form in those of Plato, and with a dash of legerdemain, in the transcendentalism of recent times. There seems to be no possibility of reaching any real discovery after that fashion; and only in as far as the facts of nature or of revelation have been further explored or accepted, have modifications passed upon that ever-revolving cycle. As was held by Aristotle, long before Lord Bacon, and by Socrates before either of them, there is more knowledge to be obtained from daily occurring facts than from the whole range of such speculations, further than they analyze, classify, and read the lessons of phenomena. Christian enterprise may or may not be employed in that sphere. What we mean to advance is, that although most promising, it is far from being the most profitable. A teacher will find in the apparently dull and uninviting labours of his profession, far more sources of fresh and hitherto unexhausted thought, if he will bend his attention to inquire them out. Witness the improvement in that profession within the last twenty years. It amounts to a revolution, and that effected by the efforts of only a few enterprising and indefatigable minds, but addressed to the subject, in all its details, with a loving interest. The work is still progressive, and much remains to be done, and intelligent enterprise addressed to the subject may discover many other improvements which are not yet conceived of.

If a man's heart is profoundly engaged in his work, and his mind quickened and directed by practice of intelligent methods, discoveries will multiply around him, which, even if not found out for the first time, will have all the effect of discoveries upon his action. The human mind acquires energy and productiveness from earnest questionings of the word of God, and of his

works. And of all human occupations, those of a gospel minister would seem to furnish the most abundant and congenial sphere for such intellectual, spiritual, and social enterprise. If a man is not to content himself with going over the same flat and well-trodden surface, and thereby making things easy to himself; if he will not waste his time in pretentious speculation, but enter cordially into the individual sympathies of those under his care, seek to thoroughly understand, and devise ways and means of reaching them with the message of salvation, no richer mine of valuable knowledge could be desired.

Such is, in fact, the enterprise exacted of the Christian ministry; and in whatever branch of the church it is abandoned, there coldness and formality supervene. We need only allude to the Protestant churches of Europe in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. Sometimes persecution is called in to awaken the dormant energies that ought to be at work, and sometimes the alarming progress of error. Happy the country which, in such a state, is blessed with a peaceful revival, led by some earnest and enterprising spirit, full of zeal for Christ, a Francke, a Whitefield, a Wesley, an Edwards, or a Chalmers. And even without learning, and without superior talents, how many ways of doing good will be discovered by such men as Harlan Page and Paterson of Kilmany. To the Christian, not so much the speculations of theology as the endlessly varied phenomena of life, and the methods of imbuing them with gospel truth, are the richest sources of discovery and of power. And in what other sphere of enterprise is there so much to be done—is the labour of so many hands, the ingenuity of so many minds, demanded? Is not the gospel to be preached to every creature? Are not the kingdoms of the earth to become the kingdoms of our Lord? Is one-half the work yet done? It is not time yet for the soldiers of the Lord of Hosts to content themselves with the conquests already made.

God honours men largely in admitting them to coöperate with him. He has made many of the most desirable results to depend upon their action. It behoves them, accordingly, to perform their offices, not in a superficial and perfunctory man-

ner, but with the most earnest intention of mind. On this condition, if we do not always find the success we desire, we shall at least reap a rich harvest of intellectual and spiritual profit. For "he that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he."

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ART. VI.—*African Colonization.*

"I DOUBT not," said the Rev. John Newton, just three months before the battle of Lexington, "but some who are yet unborn will hereafter clearly see and remark that the present unhappy disputes between Great Britain and America, with their consequences, whatever they may be, are a part of a series of events of which the extension and interests of the church of Christ were the principal final causes."—*Letter to a Nobleman, January 20, 1775.*

The great consequences of the disputes between Great Britain and America have been the independence of the colonies, the organization of the States under a federal and state constitutions, and the unparalleled prosperity of our country in her increased population, wealth, and influence among the nations of the earth. And contemporaneous with this increase in things political, secular, and temporal, has been a corresponding increase of zeal and activity in the church of Christ, of a missionary spirit, of organizations well devised for the spread of the gospel, and of numbers added to the household of faith. There is now a strong probability that the Anglo-Saxons of North America are to be the principal agents in the hands of God, in performing the works and in effecting the changes introductory to the Millennium. Recent developments of God's providences in different parts of the world indicate rapid changes shortly to take place. And the spirit of prayer, of revival, and of missions, that pervades the churches on both sides of the Atlantic, together with the teachings of prophecy, authorize us to expect changes in their whole tendency favour-