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A

LETTER

TO THE

REV. DR. WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE;

PUBLISHED IN THE

APPENDIX

TO HIS

VOLUME OF LECTURES

ON

REVIVALS.

BY EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE.

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LETTER.

Williams College, Jan. 20, 1832.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

You ask me for some account of the early American revivals in the modern series, particularly those in which I was permitted to take a part, and those which have occurred in this college; together with my views of the proper means of conducting them and of guarding against the dangers incident to their abuse.

Long before the death of Whitefield in 1770, extensive revivals in America had ceased. And except one in Stockbridge and some other parts of Berkshire county, Mas. about the year 1772; and one in the North Quarter of Lyme, Conn. about the year 1780; and one in several towns of Litchfield county, Conn. about the year 1783; I know of none which occurred afterwards till the time of which I am to speak.

About the year 1792 commenced three series of events of sufficient importance to constitute a new era. That year the blood began to flow in Europe, in that contest which, with short intervals, was destined to destroy the "man of sin" and to introduce a happier form of society and the glorious state of the Church. That year was established at Kettering in England, the first in the continuous series of societies which have covered the whole face of the Protestant world and introduced the age of missions and of active benevolence. And that year or the year before began the unbroken series of American revivals. There was a revival in North Yarmouth, Me. in 1791. In the summer of 1792 one appeared in Lee, in the county of Berkshire. The following November, the first that I had the privilege of witnessing showed itself on the borders of East Haddam and Lyme, Conn. which apparently brought to Christ about a hundred souls. Since that time revivals have never ceased. I saw a continued succession of heavenly sprinklings at New Salem, Farmington, Middlebury, and New Hartford, (all in Connecticut,) until, in 1799, I could stand at my door in New

Hartford, Litchfield county, and number fifty or sixty contiguous congregations laid down in one field of divine wonders, and as many more in different parts of New England. By 1802 revivals had spread themselves through most of the western and southern States; and since that time they have been familiar to the whole American people.

I preached my first sermon at New Hartford Oct. 26, 1794. In the fall of 1795 a revival commenced, which in the course of the winter apparently brought about fifty to the knowledge of the truth. The neighbouring towns were not then visited: but in October 1798 a great revival began at West Simsbury on the east, and soon extended to Torrington on the west, and we were left like a parched island in the midst of surrounding floods. The agonies of that hour can never be told. First one, and then two, and afterwards more met me in my study for prayer, and the wrestlings were such as I had never witnessed in a meeting before. On the 4th of November I went to the house of God, saying as I went, "My soul, wait thou only, only, *only* upon God, for my expectation is from him." During the morning service I scarcely looked at the audience, and cared not whether they were asleep or awake, feeling that the question of a revival did not lie between me and them, but was to be settled in heaven. In the afternoon, in alluding to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and we were left, and could hardly hope for another visit so soon, and to the awful prospects of sinners in the middle of life if another revival should not come in twelve or fifteen years, I seemed to take an eternal leave of heads of families out of Christ; I came near falling; I thought I should be obliged to stop; but I was carried through. The next day it was apparent that a revival had commenced; a dozen heads of families of the most respectable class were under conviction; and in the course of the winter and the following year a hundred were hopefully added to the Lord. The last time that I heard that 4th of November referred to at New Hartford, I was told that between forty and fifty of those who had been received to the church, dated back their convictions to that day.

In October 1800 the health of my family and the peremptory advice of physicians compelled me to leave New Hartford. I spent the winter in Orange, New Jersey. A time of refreshment from the pre-

sence of the Lord was afforded us, and about fifty were added to the church. In October 1801 I was installed at Newark. A revival commenced the following winter, which continued through 1802 and extended into 1803. In my journal, under date of Feb. 16, 1803, I find a hope expressed that the number of converts amounted to a hundred. The neighbouring ministers were revived, and in the spirit of prayer went forth two and two to visit the congregations, spending a day and holding two meetings in a place, and continuing out six days. These means began to be blest as early as January 1803, and that year about twenty contiguous congregations experienced the mighty power of God.

In the spring of 1807 some seriousness appeared in Newark and a very few obtained hopes; but the impression past off. In the summer some half a dozen Christians were much exercised for a revival, and, as it appeared afterwards, several sinners were nightly carried in their dreams to the judgment seat, who threw off their impressions by day. In the latter part of August a great revival broke out at Elizabethtown on the south and at Orange on the west. The Friday before the first sabbath in September, (which was our communion sabbath,) was observed by the church in Newark as a day of fasting and prayer. On sabbath morning a meeting was held expressly to pray for a blessing on the word that day. Some went with little impression, who found themselves and their brethren lost in that desire, and returned with a strong hope that such a blessing would follow. The next day I found several Christians saying that they never had had such a sense of the truths brought out on the sabbath before. At a meeting in the evening I saw and felt such tokens of the divine presence, that I had no longer a doubt that a revival had begun. It *had* begun with mighty power. In all such seasons, if any feeling had been more prominent than the rest, it was a deep sense of absolute dependance: but never had I had so deep a sense of this before. I could not keep at home; I was constantly going from house to house; and yet I felt that I was doing nothing but holding a torch to the tinder which God had prepared. The work extended to about the same number of congregations as before, and by the same means, the ministers going out two and two as in the former case. In Newark ninety eight joined the

church at one time, and about two hundred in all. By this time it was understood why a greater sense of dependance had been granted: the work was to be greater than I had ever seen before.

The first of June 1809, I was removed by the providence of God and by the advice of my brethren, to the Theological Seminary at Andover, and to a connexion with the infant church in Parkstreet, Boston, as a stated preacher. The house in Parkstreet not being finished, and the Rev. Mr. French of Andover dying that summer, I took the pulpit and supplied it till winter for the benefit of the family. It pleased God to pour out his Spirit. A revival of very considerable extent ensued, calculated to fit that atmosphere to be breathed by the sons of the prophets. One of the subjects of the work, an only child, went out afterwards a missionary's wife to India, and the affectionate parents, I have been informed, were heard to say, they never were so happy in their lives.

The church in Parkstreet having become discouraged by several unsuccessful applications for a pastor, I thought it my duty, in the spring of 1811, to devote myself wholly to them. For four years we had a continual sprinkling, but things were not ripe for a heavenly shower. The congregation in Newark having amicably divided, and the second congregation being vacant, they solicited me in the spring of 1815 to return to them. There were circumstances which led me to believe that such was the will of God. I went about the first of June. In December 1816 a powerful revival began in the two congregations, and about the same time in some neighbouring towns, which continued through most of the following year. I have no document to show the numbers that were added to the churches.

In September 1821 I was appointed President of this college; and the indications of the divine will were so clear that I durst not refuse.

Thus, my dear Sir, I have wandered over the first part of the ground which your partial friendship assigned me, and will now confine myself to the more important history of God's dealings with this institution.

It was from Litchfield county that the spirit of the new era gradually crept upon this college. For near seven years after the charter was obtained, the professors in all the classes amounted on-

ly to five; until, in February 1800, two of the members professed religion in Litchfield county, where they had been subjects of one of the revivals of 1799. At the next commencement one of them graduated and another from the same revivals entered. These two were the only professors in the classes, until joined by four more from the revivals of the same county the following spring, which made an important change in the religious character of the college. The next class that entered were nearly half professors, who in their senior year took part in the first revival.

The earliest revival known to this town commenced in the spring of 1805 and continued between two and three years. It soon extended to the college, where five began to hope. In the spring of 1806 a new impulse was given to the work. That spring was made memorable to the college by the admission to its bosom of those distinguished youth, Samuel John Mills and Gordon Hall. Mills had been prepared by the revival at Torrington, Litchfield county, in 1798, 9, and he joined a class which contained such men as James Richards and Robert Chauncey Robbins. He entered into the revival with all his heart; and in the course of the summer eight or ten of that class became subjects of the work, and one or two others, among whom was Gordon Hall, who joined the church in Williamstown that same year. The work seems to have continued beyond the summer; for one account says, "Thirteen were added to the church, of whom nine became ministers of the Gospel. Ten others were supposed to be subjects of the revival." Another account, drawn up in 1827, says, "Besides those who became church members from the classes that graduated in 1805, 6, 7, 8, 9, about seventeen have since become professors of religion."

Mills had devoted himself to the cause of missions from the commencement of his new existence, and by the influence of that revival he was enabled to diffuse his spirit through a choice circle who raised this college to the distinction of being the birth place of American missions. In the spring of 1808 they formed a secret society, to extend their influence to other colleges and to distinguished individuals in different parts of the country. One of them first roused the missionary energies of Pliny Fisk, who afterwards died in Palestine. In the autumn of that year, in a beautiful meadow on the banks of the Hoosack, these young Elijahs prayed into exis-

tence the embryo of American missions. In the fall of 1809, Mills and Richards and Robbins carried this society to Andover, where it roused the first missionary band that went out to India in 1812, and where it is still exerting a mighty influence on the interests of the world. In that band were Gordon Hall and Luther Rice of this college. Richards soon followed and laid his bones in India. Mills and his coadjutors were the means of forming the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Bible Society, the United Foreign Missionary Society, and the African School under the care of the Synod of New York and New Jersey; besides all the impetus given to domestic missions, to the Colonization Society, and to the general cause of benevolence in both hemispheres. Such were the fruits of the revivals in Litchfield county and of the first revival in this college.

In January 1812 another revival commenced in town under the preaching of Samuel Nott, one of the first five missionaries who went out that year to India. In April and May it extended to the college, chiefly to the three lower classes. Twenty four were hopefully converted then and a number afterwards. Another account says, "Twenty one were added to the church, of whom thirteen have become ministers of the Gospel. Several others felt the power of this revival, and their lives have since proved that the effects were not transient."

In June 1815 the first President left the college. His parting sermon had a great effect on the students. A third revival followed. Fifteen were hopefully renewed in the course of the summer. Another account says, "Twelve were added to the church, of whom nine became ministers of the Gospel. Several others received very salutary impressions, whose lives have since shown the value of this revival to them."

About the first of March 1824 a fourth revival appeared to commence in the person of William Hervey, now a missionary in India. Twelve or fourteen used to attend the inquiry meetings. Several obtained hopes who endured but for a time. Hervey alone persevered. Of the others that were impressed, one obtained a hope in the summer of 1825, and is now a minister of the Gospel; another joined the church after he graduated, and is now a professor in the institution.

When college came together in October 1825, the arrows of the Almighty stuck in several hearts. Some old hopes were scattered to the winds. A fifth revival ensued. During the latter part of the term the power was astonishingly great, affecting almost the whole college. Of eighty five students, full seventy thought themselves Christians. The impression was kept up through the spring term, but there it ended. In this revival thirty five experienced hopes, some of which were soon renounced. For aught I know, from twenty five to twenty seven are hoping still, and another who relapsed has apparently been recovered. Twelve or thirteen are in the ministry or looking forward to it. Of these, Hollis Reed went with Hervey to India; two belong to a company of ministers who, in the spirit of missions, have located themselves for life in the new settlements beyond the Mississippi; and two or three others have been pondering on a missionary life.

The sixth revival began about the first of March 1827, and continued till vacation. It spent its chief force on the two lower classes, from which six professed religion.

In October 1828 some seriousness appeared, which continued through that and the next term. Nine visited me under some impressions. Inquiry meetings were set up. One obtained a hope which was soon renounced. Not an individual held out. Three of them however have since given evidence of a saving change.

A seventh revival appeared to commence in November 1829. That month two gave evidence of piety who still continue. High hopes were entertained and a determination was taken to pray till the blessing came. Meetings for prayer, accompanied with considerable excitement, were kept up through the term, and through the long winter vacation, and through the spring term. I attended till broken off by sickness in April 1830. In the course of the winter two more expressed hopes, one at least of which proved doubtful.

On the evening of January 6th, 1831, I was sent for to visit Troy, where the first in the series of protracted meetings in this region had lately been held, and where a great revival had begun. I went on the 8th and returned on the 19th. Something hopeful had begun to appear in town before I left home, and on Friday evening the 21st I went to a meeting to tell the people what I had

seen. One of the students, hearing that a statement was to be made, went, and was awakened. The next week we had a four days meeting, beginning with a fast and ending with the communion sabbath. This was the second protracted meeting in the series, and was attended with an evident blessing. A revival began in town. During vacation two of the students obtained hopes here, and two more in Troy. When college came together the 10th of February, it was a time of great solemnity. The month of March was full of power. By the second of April twenty, including those already mentioned, were apparently rejoicing in the truth. Of these, four soon renounced their hope; the other sixteen, for aught I know, still endure, and the greater part appear like devoted Christians.

These are the eight revivals which the pity of heaven has granted to this college in twenty six years, five of which, including two of less extent, have appeared in seven years.*

The means employed in these revivals have been but two,—the clear presentation of divine truth and prayer: nothing to work upon the passions but sober, solemn truth, presented, as far as possible, in its most interesting attitudes, and closely applied to the conscience. The meetings have been still and orderly, with no other signs of emotion in the hearers than the solemn look and the silent tear. We have been anxiously studious to guard against delusive hopes and to expose the windings of a deceitful heart, forbearing all encouragement except what the converts themselves could derive from Christ and the promises, knowing that any reliance on our opinion was drawing comfort from us and not from the Saviour. We have not accustomed them to the bold and unqualified language that such a one *is* converted, but have used a dialect calculated to keep alive a sense of the danger of deception. For a similar

* April 18, 1832. There is at the present moment the ninth revival going on in college. On the 18th of January we had a fast in town to pray for such a blessing in the college and congregation. After that I recommended it to the students who staid in vacation, to hold meetings for prayer. The third which they held was on the 1st of February, and I was invited to attend. I found the meeting uncommonly interesting and encouraging. I was then labouring under the commencement of a disease which confined me till near the middle of March. In that interval a protracted meeting was held in town and a revival commenced there, and the spirit of prayer was greatly increased in college and a spirit of inquiry began among the impenitent. The first hopeful conversion in college took place on the 16th of March, two days before I renewed my public labours in the house of God. There are now seven students who venture to hope that they have "passed from death unto life." Every thing is conducted with perfect stillness and decorum.

reason we have kept them back from a profession about three months.

Sinners have been constantly urged to immediate repentance, and every excuse has been taken away. At the same time we have not denied or concealed their dependance for the sake of convincing them of their obligations. On the contrary, we have esteemed it vital to urge that dependance in order to drive them from all reliance on their own strength, and to make them *die* to every hope from themselves. All that you can possibly gain by flattering their independence, is to extort a confession of their *obligations*; for as to matter of fact, they *will not* submit until they are made willing in the day of God's power. And if you can fasten upon them their obligations without that falsehood which robs God of his glory, pray let it be done. This we have found it possible to do. We have shown them that their obligations rest on their faculties, and are as reasonable and as complete as though the thing required was merely to walk across the floor; that their faculties constitute a natural ability, that is, *a full power to love and serve God if their hearts were well disposed*, leaving nothing in the way but a bad heart, for which they are wholly to blame if there is any blame in the universe; that sin can rest nowhere but in the heart, and that if you drive it beyond the heart you drive it out of existence; that *they alone* create the necessity for God to conquer them, and to decide whether he will conquer them or not; that it is an everlasting blot on creation that God has to speak a second time to induce creatures to love him, much more that he has to constrain them by his conquering power; and yet after all his provisions and invitations,—after he has sent his Son and his Spirit to save them,—after he has opened the door wide and stands with open arms to receive them,—they will still break their way to perdition if his almighty power do not prevent; that by their own fatal obstinacy they are cast entirely upon his will; that they are wholly in his hands,—that if he frown they die, if he smile they live forever. This is the grandest of all means to press them out of themselves, to cast them dead and helpless upon God, to make them *die* that they may be made alive. Conceal their dependance in order to make them feel their obligations! The maddest purpose that ever was conceived, unless the thing required is to be done in their own

strength. And then why do you *pray* for the Spirit? “In all thy ways *acknowledge him*, and he shall direct thy paths.” But in this greatest of all his works he is chiefly jealous for his honour. He will not hear your prayers for a revival, if, when you go out from his presence, you tell sinners that he has nothing to do in the business but to convict,—that the god which regenerates is light. If there is any truth sweeter than all the rest, it is this, that we are absolutely, totally, and eternally dependant on his sanctifying grace and that he will have all the glory;—if any view of God more supporting and encouraging than all the rest, it is that which the Christian takes when he feelingly says, “My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.” Take any thing else away, but take not away my God. This is the last truth that I will give up till I yield my reason and my immortal hopes. If there is any truth in defence of which I would go on a crusade,—or, better still, in support of which I would go to the stake,—it is this. If you see this denial shut up heaven, and then, instead of the Holy Ghost, you see revivals carried on by human devices operating on the passions, there is more cause to mourn than to rejoice.

I do not object to all measures to arrest attention, to move moderately the imagination and passions, and to put the whole man into action towards God and his revealed truths. I am no advocate for addressing men as intellectual statues. But there is always some danger in working on this part of the human constitution by other means than truth set in its most affecting light and pressed home upon the conscience, and at no period of existence is the danger so great as at the crisis referred to. The imagination and passions are useful handmaids; but when they assume dominion, they make a religion of bad proportions if not altogether delusive. This the history of religious enthusiasm shows on every page.

All this is known to the educated in our country; and if any of them have adopted measures calculated to give undue preponderance to imagination and passion, it has been, for the most part, to answer other purposes of religious policy. Much has been done of late to lead awakened sinners to *commit themselves*, in order to get them over that indecision and fear of man which have kept them back, and to render it impossible for them to return with

consistency. For this purpose they are called upon to request public prayers by rising, to come out into the aisle in token of their determination to be for God, to take particular seats, called, in bad English, anxious seats, to come forward and kneel in order to be prayed for, and in very many instances, to *promise* to give themselves to religion at once. For much the same purpose converts are called upon to take particular seats, and thus virtually to make a profession in a day, and are hurried into the church in a few weeks. These measures, while they are intended to commit the actors, are meant also to awaken the attention of others, and to serve as means of general impression. I would not make a man an offender for a word; but when these measures are reduced to a system and constantly repeated,—when, instead of the former dignity of a Christian assembly, it is daily thrown into a rambling state by these well meant maneuvers,—it becomes a solemn question whether they do not give a disproportionate action to imagination and passion, and lead to a reliance on other means than truth and prayer, and on other power than that of God. I have seen enough to convince me that sinners are very apt to place a self righteous dependance on this act of commitment. “I have taken one step, and now I hope God will do something for me,” is language which I have heard more than once. Against any *promises*, express or implied, I utterly protest. If they are promises to do any thing short of real submission, they will bring up a feeling that more the sinner is not bound to do: if they are promises to submit, they are made in the sinner’s own strength and are presumptuous. The will, which forms resolutions and utters promises, cannot control the heart. Sinners are bound to love God at once, but they are not bound to promise beforehand to do it and rely on their own will to change their heart. This is self-dependance. They are bound to go forth to their work at once, but they are not bound to go alone: it is their privilege and duty to cast themselves instantly on the Holy Ghost and not to take a single step in their own strength. In these extorted promises there is another evil,—the substitution of human authority for the divine. It is right for Christians to urge upon sinners the obligation of immediate submission, and they cannot enforce this too much by the authority of God; but to stand

over them and say, "Come, now promise; promise this moment; *do* promise; you *must* promise; promise and I will pray for you, —if you dont I wont;" is overpowering them with human authority and putting it in the room of the divine.

Sometimes these new measures are plainly intended to work on the imagination and passions. When, in addition to all the rest, a whole assembly are called upon to kneel, what is this but a measure intended merely for *effect*? No new *truth* is thereby conveyed to the mind. Truth has to do with reason and conscience, but these tactics with imagination and passion first, and afterwards with a stupid reliance on forms, as the whole history of the Church attests. Is there no danger that we may again "be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ"? The frequent repetition of these imposing ceremonies will destroy their effect, and leave us with forms instead of feelings. It was in this way that the primitive Church sunk into all the dead formalities of the church of Rome. The ceremonies were first adopted because they were thought to be impressive. In time they ceased to impress, and then the magnificent and garnished body of worship was accepted for the soul. This is the certain course of fallen nature. It is dangerous to work in human inventions upon the forms of our worship. He who made and united the body and soul, best knows what forms are adapted to our nature. The more simple they are the less they draw the mind off from God and truth.

God forbid that I should speak against protracted meetings, but I will speak against their abuse. In this imperfect world it is almost impossible that such a stimulating institution should not be abused. It is so much easier to enter into the excitements of a protracted meeting than to "tug at the oar of prayer" in secret, or even to exercise a holy heart; it is so much easier to move the people by these impassioned forms than to bring down the Holy Ghost by the struggles of faith; that there is the utmost danger that these meetings will be put in the room of secret prayer and of the Holy Ghost and even of personal religion. When I see them relied on to produce revivals without previous prayer, and a boast made that Christians were stupid when they began; when I see a revival of ten days produce its hundred converts, and the people, who were stupid before, relapse into the same stupidi-

ty at the end of the protracted meeting ; I cannot but say, How different are these from the revivals of the last forty years, which were preceded by long agonies of desire and prayer, and which transmitted their spirit to many succeeding months.

There is another difference, I fear, in many cases. In those revivals unwearied pains were taken to lay open the divine character in all its benevolence, holiness, and justice ; to present the divine government in all its righteousness and purity, in all its sovereignty and covenant faithfulness, in all its reasonableness and benignity and awful terrour ; to lay open the carnal heart, festering with every evil passion, and the horrid nature of sin, with its infinite demerits ; to explain the great provision of the atonement and the terms of acceptance with God ; to bring out the mercy which melts in the Gospel and to press home the invitation ; to show the reasonableness and sincerity of God in all his treatment of sinners, and the unreasonableness of their obstinacy in rejecting the Gospel. All these and many other topics furnished matter always new and always affecting to the conscience. It was all regarded as an exhibition of *God*, in his character, government, and relations to men ; and if we could make a clear manifestation of God, we felt a confidence in leaving the issue in the hands of that Spirit whose office work it is to take of the things of God and show them to men. But now I fear that in many instances there is so much reliance on these newly invented means of impression, that the truths of God are but very imperfectly brought out or even studied ; dependance being placed on a few topics of exhortation, without the *reasons* which the truths of the universe furnish. The consequence must be that the people will be left in ignorance, with a high susceptibility of irregular excitement, and exactly fitted, should more sober habits return, to fill the ranks of the most extravagant sectaries,—the same that happened in New England some eighty years ago.

I have no fellowship with harsh or violent measures ; such as abruptly telling a professor that she has no religion and is going directly to hell, (merely because she is cold ;) and when she is horror struck and begs you to pray for her, tearing yourself away and saying, I *wont* pray for you, and breaking out of the room, leaving her in agonies on the floor ; all to shake her off from dependance on you, but really endangering her reason and life.

Nor have I any more complacency in public personalities ; such as calling people by name in prayer or preaching ; holding up certain neighbourhoods as subjects of public prayer on account of their special wickedness or neglects ; and worse than all, deliberately labouring to make sinners angry, in order to show them how they hate God and his people and his truth ; thus doing evil that good may come.

“ Let your women keep silence in the churches,” says Paul ; “ for it is not permitted unto them to speak.—*And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home* ; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”* They may not even make public inquiries after truth. “ Let the women learn in silence with all subjection ; but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”† The contexts will show that the church referred to was not a judicatory, but a common Christian assembly for instruction and worship ; and the reasons assigned for the prohibition apply as much to public *prayers* as to public teaching, and certainly as much as to public *inquiries after truth*. And prayers are public in any assembly of men and women collected for devotion. It is not necessary, to make it public, that the assembly should be in the sanctuary or on the sabbath. The primitive Christians had no sanctuary, and often held those assemblies of which Paul speaks on other days of the week. Wherever the sexes are mixed up in an assembly for social prayer, there the prohibition applies. Nor is this against our mothers and wives and sisters and daughters. They will gain more respect and influence by keeping in the place which nature and nature’s God assigned them, than by breaking forth as Amazons into the department of men.

From these excesses two special evils are sure to follow ; one among the ignorant, the other among the learned and refined. That among the ignorant is gross, palpable *disorder*. It is impossible that the local scenes of the last six years should have been enacted, and that the events of the last year should have given currency so wide to some of them, without producing among the ignorant out-breaking disorder somewhere. These fruits, I hope, have not yet extensively appeared ; but a late scene which has been descri-

* I Cor. 14. 34, 35. † I Tim. 2. 11, 12.

bed to me as “a perfect revel of fanaticism,” may serve as an example. Among other excesses, when the awakened were called out into the aisle, some women found themselves converted, and in the midst of a crowded assembly, and with a loud voice, began to pray for their husbands. And this was taken, by men hitherto deemed sober,—perhaps *too* sober,—as proof of the extraordinary descent of the Holy Spirit. Such disorders, and worse than these, will infallibly spread themselves all abroad, if ministers and distinguished members of the Church do not combine in earnest to check present measures. Human nature must cease to be human nature if this is not the result. The other evil referred to is, that these excesses, (I speak not of the *disorders*,) prejudice men of learning and taste against revivals, and arm the influence of society against them. And thus while they throw discredit on the most precious of God’s works and obscure his glory where it was chiefly to be shown, they lay stumbling blocks before the blind over which millions will fall into hell. Let the attention of the world be aroused by every hallowed means; let the imagination and passions be wrought upon as far as the most sweet and solemn and awful truths of God can move them; let every knee be pressed to the earth in prayer, and every authorized tongue be strained with entreaties to dying men; let the whole operation be as impressive, as irresistible, as love and truth and eloquence can make it: but O, for the honour of Christ and his Spirit, and in pity to the cultivated millions of our race, let revivals be conducted with order and taste, and shun every thing by which our brethren may be offended or made to fall.

I am, Dear Sir,
 With every sentiment of affection,
 Your friend and brother.

E. D. GRIFFIN.

REV. W. B. SPRAGUE, D. D.