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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Poetry.

Who can tell what a Baby thinks?

(Ruth, kneeling and rocking the cradle.)

What is the little one thinking about?

Very wonderful things, no doubt!

Unwritten history!

Unfathomed mystery!

Yet he laughs and cries and eats and drinks,

And chuckles and crows, and nods and winks,

As if his head were as full of kinks

And curious riddles as any sphinx!

Warped by colic, and wet by tears,

Punctured by pins, and tortured by fears,

Our little nephew will lose two years;

And he'll never know

Where the summers go;—

He need not laugh, for he'll find it so!

Who can tell what a baby thinks?

Who can follow the gossamer links

By which the mannikin feels his way

Out from the shore of the great unknown,

Blind, and wailing, and alone,

Into the light of day?

Out from the shore of the unknown sea,

Tossing in pitiful agony,—

Of the unknown sea that reels and rolls,

Specked with the barks of little souls—

Barks that were launched on the other side,

And slipped from heaven on an ebbing tide!

What does he think of his mother's eyes?

What does he think of his mother's hair?

What of the cradle roof that flies

Forward and backward through the air?

What does he think when her quick embrace

Presses his hand and buries his face

Deep where the heart throbs sink and swell

With a tenderness she can never tell,

Though she murmur the words

Of all the birds—

Words she has learned to murmur well?

Now he thinks he'll go to sleep!

I can see the shadow creep

Over his eyes, in soft eclipse,

Over his brow, and over his lips,

Out to his little finger-tips!

Softly sinking, down he goes!

Down he goes! Down he goes!

(Rising and carefully retreating to her seat.)

See! He is hushed in sweet repose!

—Dr. Holland's "Bitter Sweet."

Religious.

How often have desires to be present at some of the New York Fulton Street Prayer-Meetings been felt and expressed by hundreds of our readers.

Christian brethren who have been called to that great emporium of trade, have made use of the opportunity to unite, if but for once, with that great movement and have brought away recollections more cherished than a visit to any of the treasures of art and science in that great city.

The New York correspondent of the Boston *Watchman & Reflector* has given a sketch of one of these occasions, which, for its minuteness and flowing style, is second only to a personal visit.

Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting.

So much has been said of the Fulton Street prayer-meeting, and so much curiosity excited on account of it, that most persons will read with interest any account of it, especially those who have not been permitted the privilege of attending its services. It is designed more expressly as a meeting for business men, and has for more than a year been held daily from 12 to 1 o'clock. It is still crowded nearly as much as during the revival of the past season. But the character of the congregation is much changed, and the effects of the meeting are considerably different. There are in attendance now, comparatively few unconverted persons, to what there were nine months ago. Converts during the revival are largely represented there.

REQUESTS FOR PRAYER.—The many requests for prayer which are daily presented, not for anxious souls about us, but chiefly from a distance, and often for subjects of small relative importance, I think an evil. The number of requests presented for prayer by the leader, gives rather a mechanical aspect to the exercises, and burdens the time. Though well meant, I think it should be corrected by those who

have charge of the meeting. The requests are prepared in writing, and handed to the leader in an ante-room before the exercises commence. He arranges them, and presents portions of them at different times during the progress of the meeting,—except such as any person may choose to present verbally at any time.

FOR BUSINESS MEN.—The meeting is ostensibly for business men, but a great part of the time clergymen lead it, which seems to us a mistake. It should be conducted by business men. Clergymen are also found in considerable numbers in the congregation, but do not occupy an unreasonable amount of time. Indeed, few clergymen can speak to the five minute rule; and so, many keep silent. The regulations require that no more than two prayers or exhortations should follow consecutively. This is not so strictly adhered to as formerly, but the various exercises follow as the Spirit gives utterance. Singing unfortunately is somewhat crowded out. One-half of the time spent on the requests for prayer could be devoted to singing with vastly more spiritual profit, especially if it rose spontaneously from individuals instead of being given out by the leader. This, however, depends much upon the leader himself.

PLACE OF THE MEETING.—The place where the meetings are held is familiar to most persons who have often visited New York. Directly in the rear of the Old Dutch church, which fronts on William Street,—with one side open on Fulton, and the other on Ann Street,—is the lecture room or consistory building. It is attached to the church, and runs back from it sufficiently far to make the width of a comfortable lecture room. This building is three stories high, with three rooms of similar size, one over the other. The one on the second story is the principal one, and that in which the prayer-meeting proper is held; though usually two, and sometimes all three of them are occupied. The rooms are approached both from Ann Street and from Fulton Street. But as the greater number came through the Fulton Street entrance that street has given name to the meeting.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE MEETING.—To give an idea of the general character of the meeting, and the spirit and nature of the exercises, I will give a description of a single service. The day is damp, with slight falls of snow and rain, and of course the streets are unpleasantly muddy. Fifteen minutes before 12 o'clock, I approach the Fulton Street entrance, and just before me, as I turn into it, are two ladies and a gentleman, doubtless strangers from a distance, who wish to attend a meeting of which they have heard so much. Two or three men walk deliberately up the passage to the lecture-room. Ten minutes before the time to commence arrives, there are about thirty persons in the room, one dozen of whom are ladies. Friends talk with friends in low tones, or look over the hymn books scattered plentifully through the room. One man sits with his hat on, but the most have a very serious air, and evidently come to worship. Five minutes before noon, there are some seventy-five persons present, about two dozen of whom are ladies. The sexton orders the sittings, seating the ladies near the desk, and requiring them to sit more compactly than the style of costume makes convenient. Each seat is filled, though not unpleasantly crowded. A few moments before the time to begin arrives, the leader comes in with a quantity of loose papers in his hand, on which are written the various requests for prayer. He takes his seat at the desk, selects a hymn, finds a portion of Scripture to read, arranges the papers, and surveys the audience.

OPENING EXERCISE.—Just as the great bell on the City Hall,—or rather behind it, where it hangs since the fire,—begins to toll 12 o'clock, the leader, who on this occasion is Rev. Dr. Vermilye, of the Collegiate Dutch church, arises, reads a portion of Scripture, and gives out a hymn, which is sung with spirit and effect, probably every one in the room uniting in the

song. At this time, the room, which will seat about three hundred is well filled, with some thirty or forty ladies present. After the hymn, the Doctor leads in a brief and appropriate prayer. Then follows singing three verses of another hymn. Then the leader opens the meeting with some remarks. He states that he had just returned from Europe. The fame of the Fulton Street prayer-meeting had crossed the Atlantic, and he was eagerly inquired of there respecting it,—its mode of service, and its influence. It had deeply interested Christians in England and on the Continent. He asked the sympathies and prayers of the meeting for struggling Christians in France, Switzerland and other portions of Europe,—but said nothing of oppressed and persecuted Baptists in Northern Europe.

READING REQUESTS FOR PRAYER, &c.—These remarks were closed by reading a number of requests for prayers. One was on behalf of a church in North Scituate. Another was for the churches in Washington city. Another was for a Presbyterian church in Keokuk, which was destitute of a pastor, that the Lord would send them one; if every church destitute of a pastor should send in a request for prayers, there would certainly be an abundance of objects,—what the people can do for themselves they ought not to burden the Fulton Street prayer-meeting with. Another was for prayers on behalf of Fort Madison, Iowa, though I believe no particular reason in the condition of the place was given why it should be specially prayed for. The fact is, many well meaning but not very judicious persons, in distant parts of the country, have an idea that all the prayers offered in that meeting will be granted or at least that they are more likely to receive answers, than prayers offered elsewhere; a very false and a very foolish notion certainly. Many such requests I think should be suppressed.

Prayer was then offered by a middle aged business man, in a very appropriate manner, referring to the various cases presented in the requests. The leader then specially requested remarks by persons from a distance, communicating any incidents, or intelligence of religious interest. No one arose, and some brother said, sing

"From Greenland's icy mountains,"

but the leader arose and gave out two verses from another hymn, which were sung.

OTHER REQUESTS.—The leader again arose and read other requests. One was for a young man almost persuaded to become a Christian. Another was from a father for a backsliding son. Another was for a young man in Baltimore. A mother in the West desired prayers for a son in college, who said if he was converted he would become a minister; he did not probably stop to think that possibly the Lord might not wish to make a minister of him, even if he converted him. Several others were presented, and then prayer was offered for the various subjects.

YOUNG CONVERT.—A very young man arose, recently converted, to praise God for his great goodness to him. He related that he had lately listened to a sermon in which the preacher spoke of each one's being constantly engaged in writing a history. What kind of a history are we writing?

INCIDENTS.—A middle aged gentleman mentioned an incident he lately witnessed, and which very forcibly impressed his mind with the worth and value of the Bible. A poor woman in circumstances of great trial and destitution, when called on, was found reading the Bible, and on being asked, declared how precious it was in her afflictions. An elderly clergyman who sat back in the room, related an incident of an infidel, and the effect which an act of Christian forgiveness had on his mind. While speaking, the sound of singing in the lower room chimed sweetly with the words of exhortation above. Those who had come after the upper room was full, stopped in the room beneath, where service was immediately commenced, and continued till the time to close them both.

OTHER REMARKS.—Remarks followed from a young man from New Haven, speaking of the influence of this meeting on Christians there; relating the character of the revival in that city; and asking the prayers of the meeting for New Haven, and especially for the college. Next arose a very tall man, spare and slightly bald, with gold spectacles, and a very thin and scattered mustache. This gentleman was from Maine, and said that when he left home his little daughter desired him to attend the Fulton Street prayer-meeting, while in New York. He spoke of the influence this meeting had exerted on the minds of Christians where he lived. Prayer was then offered by a stranger for the various objects brought before their minds in the remarks listened to. The leader then arose, and read other requests for prayer. One was for a father, mother, and two brothers, who were living, having no hope. Another was for a sister who had lost her reason. A wife in Milwaukee asked prayers for an unconverted husband. A sister desired prayers for an unconverted sister living in Rome, Ga.

CONCLUSION.—The leader, in conclusion, asked if some brother would lead in prayer for these various objects. But before the request was responded to, a man of ordinary respectable appearance arose, and said he desired to state a circumstance, and include another request with those already offered. He lived in New Jersey, away down near the capes, and was in the city on business. At the hotel where he stopped was a young man occupying the same room with him. A day or two after coming there, his valise had been opened in his absence and twenty-five dollars taken out. He naturally suspected this young man, and his suspicions arose to a fixed conviction. He doubted whether to use the law and have him arrested and examined, or to use the gospel, and take him to the room and talk with him. As he did not seem to be a hardened young man, he preferred to try the latter. He took him to their room, and told him that he suspected him of the theft, but that he had nothing to fear. If he did it, let him confess it, and if in any great want, he might render him assistance. The young man readily confessed he had taken it, and spent fifteen dollars of it the first night in dissipation, but seemed to be ashamed of his course, and sorry for his sin. The friend talked with him, and prayed with him, said he appeared really penitent, and he now asked the prayers of the brethren for him. An earnest and appropriate prayer was then offered. The time had come to close, the clock would strike one in a few minutes. The leader arose, and after a few words of exhortation, gave out a few verses which were sung, the benediction pronounced, and the majority hurried away to their business, exchanging hasty recognitions on friends as they passed. Strangers and others not in haste lingered a moment with fraternal greetings, some repeating incidents of interest which their diffidence, or the want of time, had prevented them from speaking of during the meeting. The spirit of the meeting is gentle, generous, devout, and catholic. Aside from a small restraint on its freedom of utterance, occasioned by the formality of so many requests for prayer, within a period of time limited, the spirit of warm and earnest devotion prevails. And it is a sublime thought, that in the crowded centre of business and trade, where worldliness and deception prevail, there godly men daily recognize the great realities of religion and of an eternal life. Sacrifice and a pure offering are daily laid on the altars of the true God, under the very shadow of Mammon's temple. May it long continue a testimony against a sinful generation and a witness for Christ.

New York, Nov. 27, 1858.

The Indians on the Red River.

Even the Indians in their forests are uniting daily in the prayers of their white brethren here. On Friday a stranger stated that in one of the religious meetings of the Indians of the Red river country beyond the Mississippi, an account was given of