

(Per. D. Zamp)

Christian Messenger.

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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Poetry.

Thoughts of Heaven.

Once more to look upon the kindred faces—
The loved and lovely, that have passed from Earth!
Leaving us lonely mid the vacant places
Round hearth and board, once joyous with their
mirth;
And O, to hear the blessed tones again
For which through weary years we pined in vain!
To love, and not to fear; to dread no chill,
No change, no falsehood in the hearts we trust;
Never to shrink at thought of coming ill
In joy's full hour, as in our days of dust,
Or fondly lean upon some quivering reed
That breaks beneath us in our hour of need.
No more to watch in some beloved eye
The light of life grow paler and decay;
To mark the fading cheek, where silently
An unseen hand is writing, day by day,
Those words of doom that ask no prophet's art
To read their meaning to the sinking heart.
No more to count our fathers' three-score years,
As the doomed captive counts the lessening hours;
No more to water with our fruitless tears
The grass grown graves, where sleep our burial
flowers;
Age, youth, and rosy childhood—all that made
Our spirit's sunshine once, and now its shade.
"Eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor heart conceived,"
The faintest dream of all that waits the blest;
But this at least we know—that hearts bereaved
There meet the lost, the weary there find rest;
And eyes, that wept through all life's dreary years,
Grow bright in Heaven—for there Love hath no tears!

Religions.

The Great Want.

Why is not the Gospel more successful? Why does not the Church more rapidly extend itself? Why is the conversion of the world so long delayed, and so slowly accomplished? These are inquiries of essential importance, and, according to the spirit in which they originate, should be partially or fully examined. If proposed, as we have sometimes heard them, with a view of reflecting upon Christian institutions and agencies, we might appropriately reply, "Sirs, this is a subject too sacred for captious criticism and supercilious comment. Analyse, with an impartial mind, the principles and tendencies of the Gospel; review, without prejudice or affectation, the history of the Church, and we are content that facts should speak for themselves." But if these questions originate in a sincere desire to have unfolded and supplied the deficiencies of the Church, in a holy desire for the more rapid advancement of the Divine Kingdom, and the more speedy and complete subjugation of the world, then we can honour the motive itself, and attempt a satisfactory solution of the phenomena implied.

Now there are, we believe, at the present time, many of God's own dear people revolving these questions in their own minds, and anxiously suggesting them to one another. In the external organisations of the Church, they say, we seem to possess everything that is necessary for the achievement of the world's salvation. We have sanctuaries erected in every town, and religious ordinances regularly observed; we have ministers preaching with all the refinements of literature, and with all the graces of elocution, and we have choristers chanting hymns in melodious strains; we have Sabbath Schools diffusing the blessings of religious education, and Tract and Bible Societies promoting the circulation of the Scriptures, and of religious periodicals, among the poor and perishing; we have town and city missions at home, and missionary agents employed in almost every part of the world. And yet we seldom hear of large accessions to the spiritual communion of the Church, and never of the moral subjugation of whole towns, and nations. Why is this? Has not God promised his prospering blessing with the external agencies of his people? In the apostolic age, did not the word of the Lord have free course, and fill Jerusalem and the surrounding country with its name and influ-

ence? In subsequent ages, when fewer facilities were possessed for evangelical effort than at present, did not the Church travel onward, in the greatness of its strength, speaking in righteousness, and mighty to save? And, as the result of its labours, were not multitudes of precious souls converted, and the Redeemer's kingdom extended east, west, north, and south? Why is it not so now? Has the gospel lost its transforming power? Has God forgotten to verify his promise. Shall we labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought?

We sympathise with such a state of mind. We confess to having revolved and proposed these questions again and again. And we have done more than this—we have framed for ourselves an answer. It is simple, requiring no elaborate disquisition to explain it, and little penetration to comprehend its application. Shall we state it for the benefit of our readers? Here it is in a few words—**THE ABSENCE OF THE HOLY GHOST.** "Aye, that's it," said a good man the other day, when this answer was suggested; "we have external means in abundance; these are often employed with self-denying zeal, and devoted energy, and disinterested love; but we have not enough of that Divine convincing and regenerating power which is resident in the Holy Ghost, and without which all human appliances will prove utterly inadequate to the conversion of a single soul." Did not Christ promise the Spirit, to convict of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment? Do not the Scriptures teach that it is not by might or by power—by human agencies abstractly considered—that the spiritual temple can be erected, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts?—that it is not he that planteth, or he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase. Indeed, is not the whole tenor of Scripture upon this subject to the effect that the Holy Spirit is the great source and promoter of spiritual success, and that when he is absent there can be neither fervour in the heart nor energy in the word; that the Church will be barren and powerless; externally adorned, but inwardly corrupt unable to communicate light to a benighted world, and feeble against the stratagems of Satan and the errors of man? And what is thus indicated by Scripture is amply corroborated by the history of the Church. The Apostles and primitive Christians were so transcendently successful, because they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spoke the word of God with boldness. After the third century, and until the Reformation in the sixteenth, the Church reposed in slumber and luxury, in error and vice, because the Divine Spirit had been resisted and grieved, and was consequently withdrawn. In a later age, Wesley, and Whitfield, and Fletcher, came forth as watchmen of the morning, awoke the slumbering Church, and diffused an influence, which, like an electric shock, revived its dormant energies, and set the whole in motion, because they were themselves filled with the Holy Ghost. And what is now pre-eminently required to counteract the influence of sin, and fill the world with holiness, to arouse it from carnal indifference to Christian activity, to produce a quenchless zeal and fervent love in the hearts of ministers and people, to nerve the Church with omnipotent power, and send it forth glorious in holiness, resistless in might, and unparalleled in success, is a large effusion of the Holy Ghost—a living baptism of hallowed fire.

This is our most deliberate conviction. We have boasted of our mercies, and have too often forgotten the source whence they proceed; we have trusted in human means, and have neglected to seek the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, upon which they are dependent for success. In the pulpit, we fear, the necessity of Divine agency has not been sufficiently enforced. In private arrangements and public enterprises, we have not acknowledged the supremacy and sought the guidance of the Spirit. In religious communion and closet devotion, we have not acquiesced with the holy intensity and waited with the Divine assurance of the disciples, prior to the day of Pentecost, for the descent of the Holy Ghost. Hence our souls have been barren, our schemes

have been unsuccessful, our churches have languished, and the world has gone on sinning against God, and falling in the snares of the devil. Is not this the case? We put it as a question to every reader, and could we hear the response of each mind, we doubt not it would affirm much that we have said.

Therefore, until this deficiency be supplied, we have no legitimate ground to expect spiritual success. We may enlarge our resources and multiply our agents—we may extend our influences and secure a world-wide fame—we may bring into our pulpits, and sanctuaries, and institutions, all the decorations of art, all the treasures of learning, all the charms of oratory, all the advantages of wealth—but, unless we enjoy the illuminating and converting power of the Holy Ghost, all will prove in vain, and we may still have to exclaim, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

The great want of the church, then, is, the Holy Spirit's presence and influence. And how can this be realised? Not by sentimental regrets and ineffective resolutions and desires, but by fervent, united, and believing prayer. Read the words of Jesus Christ upon this very subject, as recorded in the Gospel of St. Luke, xi. 9—13: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." &c. Read again the inspired prediction of Isaiah the prophet, xlv. 3—5. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." &c. Once more, read the words of Malachi, iii. 10. "And prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to receive it." What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? Why, we must pray for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We must do this in our closets, in our families, in our sanctuaries; we must do it always and not faint, instant in season and out of season; and soon the existing want of the church will be supplied, and the glorious results of his Pentecostal presence will be experienced.—*British Messenger.*

A chapter on Human Nature.

A correspondent of the Blair County (Pa.) *Whig* furnishes that paper with the particulars of the following interesting incident, of which he was an eye witness. It occurred a few weeks ago on the line of the great internal improvements in that State:

At the point on this side of the mountain, where occurred the transshipment of passengers from the west, was moored a canal-boat, waiting for the arrival of the train before starting on their way "through" to the east. The captain of the boat—a tall and sun-browned, rough, and sometimes profane man—stood by his craft, superintending the labors of his men, when the cars came in, and a dozen minutes after a party of half-a-dozen gentlemen came along, and deliberately walked up to the captain, and thus addressed him:

"Sir, we wish to go east, but our farther progress to-day depends upon you. In the cars we have just left, there is a sick man, whose presence is disagreeable. We have been appointed a committee by the passengers to ask that you will deny this man a passage on your boat. If he goes, we remain. What say you?"

By this time others had come from the cars.

"Gentlemen," said the captain, "I have heard the passengers through your committee. Has the sick man any representatives here? I wish to hear both sides of the question."

To this unexpected interrogatory there was no answer; when, without a moment's pause, the captain crossed to the car, and entering, beheld a poor emaciated, worn-out creature, whose life was nearly eaten up by the fell destroyer, consumption. The man's head was bowed in his hands, and he was weeping. The captain advanced

and spoke kindly to him. "Oh, sir!" said the trembling invalid, looking up, his face now lit with hope and expectation, "are you the captain, and will you take me? The passengers shun me and are so unkind. You see, sir, I am dying; but oh, if I can live to see my mother, I shall die happy. She lives at Burlington, sir, and my journey is more than half performed. I am a poor printer, and the only child of her in whose arms I would wish to die."

"You shall go," said the bluff captain, with an oath, "if I lose every passenger for the trip."

By this time the whole crowd of impatient passengers were grouped around the boat, with their baggage piled on the tow-path, and they themselves awaiting the decision of the captain before engaging their passage.

A moment more and that decision was made known, as they beheld him come from the cars with the sick man cradled in his strong arms. Pushing directly through the crowd with his dying burthen, he ordered a mattress to be laid in the choicest part of the cabin, where he laid the invalid with all the care of a parent. Then scarcely deigning to cast a look at the astonished crowd alongside, he shouted loudly to his hands: "Push off the boat!"

But a new feeling seemed to possess the amazed passengers—that of shame and contrition at their inhumanity. With one common impulse, each seized his own baggage and then walked immediately on board the boat.

In a short time another committee was sent to the captain, asking his presence in the cabin.

He went, and from their midst there rose a white-haired man, who, with the tears starting in his eye, told that rough captain that he had taught them a lesson—that they felt humbled before him, and they asked his forgiveness. It was a touching scene. The fountain of true sympathy was broken up in the heart of nature, and the waters welled up, choking the utterance of all present.

In an instant a purse was made up for the sick man, with a "God speed" for his welfare.

The true-hearted captain of the boat was Samuel D. Carnes, and the incident is worth remembering.

Baptist Principles most favourable to Christian Communion.

We may have true Christian fellowship with many, whom from other, as well as local causes, we cannot join in Church fellowship; and those Churches are to be regarded as having most truth and piety, that have the most extensive fellowship and real love for Christians, as such, apart from the name they bear. Take those denominations, beginning at the Roman Catholic, who are the most proud, the most selfish, the most contemptuous of others, and those are the sects, and those the churches, that have the least of the life of religion. Men of the world, the mass of Christians even, do not go into niceties, but they can easily see the spirit that is manifested. It is a spirit of love for those who love Christ and bear his image as such, it is a good, a Christian spirit. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another."

How far as Baptists we may have actually attained to the practice of this grace, it is not for us to say; but that our principles are more favourable to its developments than those probably of any other denomination, admits, we think, of demonstration. We never baptize any persons, until we first believe them to be true Christians. Hence we are obliged, in each instance, to keep Christian and church fellowship distinct, and to have the former kind of communion with them prior to, and apart from receiving them to the latter. Pedo-baptism tends rather to destroy this distinction of feeling. Especially is this the case when baptism is supposed to confer Christian character.

It is the want of this kind of spiritual interchange of affections among the different