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Poetry.

THE CHILDREN OF THE POOR.

BY MRS. BRADLEY.

Up in the garret window,
Watching the daylight die,
Two little barefoot children
Look out on the wintry sky.
Bleak is the wind of December,
And dreary the driving rain,
That whistles outside the casement,
And rattles against the pane.

There are other windows shining
Far off, with a warmer light,
And children with laughing faces
Look out on the stormy night.
For them there are fires glowing,
There are tables richly spread,
And they do not think of the children
Who are neither warmed nor fed.

I wonder what these are seeking,
With their wistful, watching eyes?
Is it the beautiful heaven
Beyond the gloomy skies?
And are the little ones longing
To go, and be at rest,
From the earthly hunger and sorrow,
Upon their Saviour's breast?

I know not what these may long for,
But this one thing I know—
There is many a dreary garret,
And cellar damp and low,
Where the children huddle in corners,
With neither fire nor food,
And never a soul to tell them
That God is wise and good.

So I pray to the Heavenly Father
He may open our hearts to bear
His gospel of love and mercy
To the little outcasts there.
It may be a trifle merely,
That you or I could do,
But a blessing goes with the effort,
And the purpose kind and true!

One little creature rescued
From sorrow and want and sin,
Would bring us a sweeter pleasure
Than the wealth of the world could win.
For the service our willing spirits
Unto the poor afford,
(And the poor we have always with us),
Is a service done to our Lord.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

The following paper was read before the Cape Breton Ministerial Conference and is published by their special request.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BY REV. JOHN BROWN, COW BAY, C. B.

The subject is one of great importance. On all hands the necessity of the Spirit's operation is recognized for the regeneration of sinners and the growth in grace and holiness of believers. Of the Spirit it may be said "Without me ye can do nothing." If we pray, it is by the Spirit's help; if we preach, our words are but empty sound unless the Spirit apply them; if we read the Bible it is a dead language to us unless the Spirit enlighten our understanding. We may preach, and pray and work for a revival, we may prophecy to the dry bones, but it is not till, like Ezekiel, in the name of the Lord, we earnestly cry, "Come O breath and breathe upon these slain that they may live," that the breath of life will come. We cannot keep too well in mind that the Holy Spirit under the direction of God is the giver and sustainer of all spiritual life, nor should we less bear in mind that the Spirit is not merely an influence, or attribute, but that He is a real and Divine Person.

The Bible teaches that He is one of the three persons in the Godhead, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, (John xv. 26) and the author or perhaps more correctly, medium, of all good in this world. It is most important that we should keep in mind the personality of the Spirit, and from the Bible which the Spirit Himself inspired, establish ourselves in that doctrine.

In prayer we need not ask for the

influence of the Spirit, but for the Spirit Himself, whom God hath promised to them that ask Him, and when the Spirit is given, His influence will be felt. That He exerts an influence is certain, but he is not that influence; we must distinguish between the agent and the operation, and while we cannot separate the one from the other, yet they are quite distinct. The Spirit is spoken of as a person in the Scriptures, as much so as the Father or the Son, and is represented as performing personal acts. In Acts viii. 29, we read "The Spirit said unto Philip," &c. And in verse 39: "the Spirit caught away Philip." In 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, "Eye hath not seen, &c., but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Paul in writing of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. xii. 11 says, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will."

He is represented as possessing the affections of a person, as being vexed, grieved, &c., and as teaching, witnessing, striving, speaking; plainly shewing that He is a person and not an influence. We therefore speak of Him as such, and look upon the work of grace in the heart as an operation, or series of operations, the Holy Spirit being the Agent. We shall not now treat of the Spirit's work except in connection with man's redemption as this may be called His peculiar or special work.

1. The Spirit convinces men of sin.

The Bible represents men in their natural state as blind to their own interests and danger, ignorant of their highest good, their conscience seared as with a hot iron; "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." (Eph. iv. 18). It is the work of the Spirit to reverse this; to give sight to the blind that they may see themselves sinners, and Christ a Saviour, hearing to the deaf that they may hear the voice of God; feet to the lame that they may run in, the way of God's commandments; life to the dead, that they may live to God. He enlightens the understanding, makes the conscience tender, convinces of sin, leads to Christ, and fills the heart with joy and peace in believing.

2. Regeneration is the work of the same Divine Agent.

"Dead in trespasses and sins" is the faithful description of man in his natural state. In order that he may become alive to God a change must necessarily take place, he "must be born again," and this change or new birth, or regeneration is accomplished by the Spirit. This change is that of the heart, not merely of the creed, and outward conduct, inasmuch as these may take place where there is no change of heart. That this change is not the work of man is clear from John i. 13, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And in John iii. 5 it says, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." (This verse has been used to defend Baptismal Regeneration, but its meaning is parallel with "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.") We read again "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" (giveth life). Regeneration then is the work of the Spirit and is an instantaneous act, for there can be no middle ground between life and death; the evidences that it has taken place being "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," hatred of sin, a love and desire for holiness, and devotedness to the glory of God, the crowning evidence of all being that of the Spirit Himself; "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 16.)

3. The Spirit also teaches to pray.

When a child is born he begins to breathe; when the sinner is born he

begins to pray. Prayer is to the spiritual life what air is to the natural. Nor is prayer only necessary and natural in the beginning of his new life, but his whole life through, and if the heart be right it will be as natural as it is necessary.

"Long as they live must Christians pray,
For only while they pray they live."

On account of his ignorance however he needs one to teach him how to pray; the Spirit is that teacher, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26.) and this help of the Spirit is within reach of all who desire it, for the ever gracious Father is ever willing to "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him;" and since, as we all recognize, it is by prayer we come near to God, and catch the radiance of His throne, as Moses did; since by prayer we lay our hands upon the springs of our agency that can fill our hearts with joy and gladness, and scatter blessings broadcast over the earth; since by prayer we have access to the boundless and inexhaustible resources of our just, holy and beneficent Father, who invites us to prove His willingness to hear and bless; since prayer arrests the attention and enlists the heart and hand of God, let our words be no empty sound when we pray that He may give us His Spirit to help us to pray and render our prayers effectual. The more we have of the Spirit's presence and power in our hearts, the more spiritual will our lives be, the more joyful shall we be, for these always go together;—"the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost, (Acts xiii. 52) and they were filled with joy, because they were filled with the Holy Ghost:—the more shall we love God and His people, and grow in grace, in holiness, in peace, and all those graces which the Spirit nourishes in us, and be "filled with the fruits of righteousness," "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and become "fruitful in every good word and work."

4. The Spirit is the Comfortor of the believer.

Christ said to His disciples (John xiv. 16.) "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth" and that promise and prayer we may safely consider as including all Christians to the end of time. In this world, ever opposed to holiness, with enemies without and greater enemies within, harassed with doubts and fears, anxieties and cares, the world, the flesh and the devil, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood," for the strength and comfort of the tried believer, "the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

There are many who lose much comfort of soul, and joy of heart, and support in the dark hours of life, by seeking and relying too much upon the comfort of others who may be offering and need comfort like themselves, instead of seeking the consolations of the Holy Spirit; the peace-giving, joy-imparting, soul-cheering Spirit. It is well worth notice that one of the more terrible aspects of the Father and the Son ever appear in connection with the Spirit. We read of the "wrath of God," of His "fiery wrath," of "the great day of His wrath," "the winepress of the wrath of God," and very many similar expressions. So of Christ "the wrath of the Lamb," His "taking vengeance on them that know not God," of His being "angry," but nowhere do we find anything of the anger, or wrath, or vengeance of the Spirit. We find instead such epithets and references as these "Thy Comforter," "the Holy Spirit of promise," "the Spirit of adoption," "the Spirit of grace," "the comfort of the Holy Ghost," "the earnest of the Spirit," "joy in the Holy Ghost," "the communion of the Holy Ghost," and a great many more of the same import. How blessed and happy must the man

be in whose heart and life the Spirit has absolute and uninterrupted control; he must enjoy much of Heaven while still on earth.

5. The Spirit reveals and applies the Truth.

He is the Divine Agent who takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us. He is the Revealer of Divine truth, without whose influence and aid the Bible is a sealed book; but when the mind is enlightened and led by the Spirit, then "things new and old" are revealed and their power applied to the heart, and manifested in the life.

In the Scriptures God reveals Himself, the Spirit through the Word reveals Him to the heart and understanding; it is there God gives "exceeding great and precious promises," the Spirit confirms those promises to the believer; there Heaven is promised to all who believe, the Spirit witnesses to the heart that it shall be so, and He Himself is the earnest of it "In whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, &c. (Eph. i. 13, 14.) Christ promised His disciples that "when He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John xvi. 13); all truth necessary for their comfort, encouragement and profit, to make them intimately and experimentally acquainted with it, not only to have the knowledge of it in their heads, but the love and power of the truth in their hearts; and the more we seek the enlightenment of the Spirit, the more shall we know of God in His word, and become more and more acquainted with the truths contained therein.

6. The Holy Spirit is the author of the progressive sanctification of the believer.

Having begun the work of grace in the heart He continues it till its consummation in glory. Through the Spirit evil passions are subdued and slain, and a desire for holiness created and cherished. Under His benign influence the fruits of grace flourish and abound. Evil thoughts like bad weeds are uprooted, and holy thoughts and desires implanted. The heart, once the seat and centre, the home and habitation of all that was wicked and reprobate, has now become the temple of the Holy Ghost, from whence through the Spirit acceptable sacrifices are offered to God.

When His influences are not quenched, when He by any coldness, lukewarmness or sin is not grieved, He forms the heart and life after the image of Christ. When we are baptised by the Spirit (not a single act but a life-long baptism) it is then we go from strength to strength, and finally when Death will sever the "silver cord" we shall appear in Zion before God, sanctification complete, glorification begun, and likeness to Christ perfected. With these facts before us we may well sing,

"Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

If what we have said of the Holy Spirit be true and we think it is, if all spiritual life and success is dependent on Him, have we not great need to pray God more earnestly than ever, that He would pour out of His Spirit upon us, that more of His power may be felt in the hearts of all believers, in our public services, and social gatherings, and in the application of truth to the conscience of the unsaved. Of this we feel certain, that when we look less to man and more to God, when we make less of mere machinery and more of the moving power of God's Spirit (for while our conferences and associations and Conventions are all useful and good in their way, they become, unless moved and actuated by the Spirit of God like an engine without steam), so much useless, dead weight. When His aid is more fully recognized, and sought, and obtained in the various means used for the spread of truth, when we take God at His word when He says "prove me" (Mal. iii. 10), we believe that the church will see greater things than ever she has seen before. What the Lord has done in Edinburgh,

Belfast, Dublin and other places will be but as the few rain drops that precede the mighty shower, or the early spring flowers that tell of "more to follow" when the earth shall be flooded with fragrance and beauty. The Lord has said that "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing," that "in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert," that "the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord," besides many other rich and precious promises; and it will be to the Glory of God and His church in the spread of Truth among men, if His people with one heart and hand use every means within their reach, in humble dependence upon the Spirit of God, to bring about such a blessed and happy time, and to expect large and immediate results of their faith and labour.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The meeting of the Convention at Henthadah was a season of high enjoyment to all present, and especially to our missionaries, five of whom were present. The exercises were partly in Burmese, partly in Karen, and partly in English. The attendance was very large, and an excellent spirit prevailed, showing that the Lord was among his people.

The Institutions at Serampore are thus described in the *Friend of India*:

Serampore must ever take high rank among the important centres of human thought and activity for it has been India's greatest benefactor. We have spoken of the locality as having been in the van in regard to the introduction of steam-power and the production of paper. It has, however, the greater glory of being the spot where first appeared a copy of the New Testament in any Indian language. Here likewise the first religious tract was struck off, as also were the first school-books, while again the first native newspaper bore in 1818 the imprint of Serampore.

One of the most interesting structures in 1845,—and the remark will apply equally to the present day—was the Mission Chapel that had been opened in 1800 on the arrival of Dr. Carey in India. The chapel is a small one, and will not accommodate much more than 100 people, but is large enough for the present needs of Serampore, and will long be regarded with veneration as the building in which the great Missionary triumvirate, Carey, Marshman, and Ward, preached with unflinching regularity for many years. Not only did they make themselves heard within the walls as the messengers of "glad tidings of peace," but they preached also continuously in the Danish Church of the settlement, that building never having been once provided by the Danes with a chaplain of their own. The equipment of the Church was in every respect meagre. It was never endowed by the Danes with any funds or property of any kind, excepting a pair of candle sticks presented in 1803 by Mr. Schow. At the present day the Church is handsomely furnished, but still it has no resident chaplain, and, if we are correctly informed, has never been consecrated.

As seen from Barrackpore, or from the river, no building in Serampore can compare in point of dignity with the College founded by Carey, Marshman, and Ward in 1818. The institution received the sanction of His Majesty of Denmark in 1820, and was incorporated on the 23rd February 1827 by a Royal Charter. We have been favoured with an inspection of this document, which was beautifully engrossed, and very handsomely bound. Everything in connection with it testifies to the importance attached by the king to the authority he was granting. Ornamented with velvet and gold, authenticated by a ponderous seal, and secured by a substantial case that testifies to the care which it was thought