

THE WANT OF MEN.

From every quarter of the missionary field at home and abroad there is an urgent and an increasing demand for men. The appeals of returned missionaries and of those who remain unaided at their posts for helpers in their work, are truly affecting, and it would seem, must move the hearts of Christian young men now engaged in secular pursuits. Every institution of learning, when bereft of an instructor, every church newly organized or bereft of a pastor, every benevolent society requiring additional agencies, feels the want of competent men. The young men of our country are not pressing into the service of Christ in the ministry as once they did. What is the cause of this deficiency, and how shall it be remedied? We would not impute the deficiency solely or chiefly to the lack of devotedness in the young men of our churches, though we believe that if young men of faith and zeal and promise, should come forward by scores and hundreds, and demand to be sent to the heathen or to the West, the churches would respond to their call. If ever the question of sending out one hundred or five hundred additional laborers into the missionary field should be put in the concrete—whether these laborers now ready and willing shall be sent or be kept back for want of means—there would be but one answer. We fear, however, that few young men have sufficient faith and zeal to put the churches to the test. Young men are jostling and crowding each other in the marts of trade, in the walks of professional life, and in the avenues of political ambition, who ought to be helping each other in the work of the Gospel at home and abroad.

But if the standard of devotedness among the young men of the churches is less elevated than it should be, the blame is not theirs alone. Too little encouragement has of late years been given by the churches to young men of promise, who are destitute of means, to enter upon the long arduous, and expensive course of preparation for the ministry. In some form, by some means, the cause of Christian education, now languishing, must be revived, if the perishing harvest of the world shall be gathered in. There is also, we fear, a defect of parental consecration which is chargeable with no small part of the lack of devotedness in the young. Many parents there are who pray and give for the cause of missions, and who feel the need of an increase of laborers, who yet are ready to plead excuses for their own children, to keep them out of the ministry, or if in the ministry, to keep them within a convenient distance of the old homestead. If men and women are to be raised up for the service of the church, they must be fostered in the family; children must be taught to regard the service of Christ in the ministry of the Gospel and in a missionary field, as the highest privilege and honour to which one can be called in the present life; the labours and trials of such a work must be sunk in the comparison with its privileges and its joys, till all the ardor of youth shall be fired to engage in it; and parents must learn so to realize eternal things, that the pleasure of having their children near them through this short and uncertain life, shall be nothing in comparison with the joy of greeting them on their return from a far country, in their Father's house on high.

The church, too, each particular church, must surround its youth with an atmosphere of life and warmth. Is it surprising that a young convert who is introduced to the society of staid and formal professors, to dull, cold-prayer meetings, and a stereotyped round of services, who is never taught by the example of older Christians to go out and labour among the poor and ignorant, to deny himself for the good of others, to make personal exertion and personal sacrifices in order to seek and save the lost,—is it surprising that such an one never imagines that it may be his duty to become a missionary? The want of men for the work of Christ in all the world, is chargeable in the last instance upon the apathy and coldness of individual churches. A church, the temperature of whose spiritual life never rises to revival heat, cannot be expected to nourish in its bosom youth burning with zeal for the service of Christ. The want of men is but a sign of the greater want of the Spirit of God.—N. Y. Independent.

Music.

The grandest office of music is that in which, no doubt, it originated—that in which, early, it had its first culture; in which, latest, it has its best—I mean its office in religion.

In the sanctuary it was born, and in the service of God it arose with a sublimity with which it could never have been inspired in the service of pleasure. More assimilated than any other art to the spiritual nature of man, it affords a medium of expression the most congenial to that nature. Compared with tones that breathe out from a profound, a spiritually musical soul, how poor is any allegory which painting can present, or that symbol can indicate. The soul is invisible; its emotions admit no more than itself of shape or limitation. The religious emotions cannot always have even verbal utterance. They often seek an utterance yet nearer to the infinite; and such they find in music. You cannot delineate a feeling—at most you can but suggest it by delineation, but in music you can by intonation directly give the feeling. Thus related to the unseen soul, music is a voice for faith, which is itself the realization of things not seen. And waiting as the soul is amidst troubles and toils, looking upward from the earth, and onward out of time, for a better world or a purer life, in its believing and glad expectancy music is the voice of its hope. In the depression and despondency of conviction; in the struggles of repentance; in the consolations and rejoicing of forgiveness; in the worldless calm of eternal peace, music answers to the mood, and soothingly breaks the dumbness of the heart. For every charity that can sanctify and bless humanity, music has its sacred measures; and well does goodness merit the richest harmony of sound, that is itself the richest harmony of heaven. Sorrow, also, has its consecrated melody. The wounded spirit and the broken heart are attempered and assuaged by the murmurings of divine song. A plaintive hymn soothes the departing soul. It mingles with weeping in the house of death. It befits the solemn ritual of the grave. The last supper was closed with a hymn, and many a martyr for Him who went from that supper to his agony, made their torture jubilant in songs of praise.

An essay equal to the subject on the vicissitudes and varieties of sacred music, would be one of the most interesting passages in the history of art. In their long wanderings to the land of promise, sacred music was among the hosts of Israel; and in that great temple of nature, floored by the desert, and roofed by the sky, they chanted the song of Miriam and of Moses. It was in their Sabbath meetings—it resounded with the rejoicings of their feasts, and with the gladness of their jubilees. When Solomon built a house to the Lord, it was consecrated with symbols, and psalteries, and harps, with the sounds of trumpets, and the swell of voices. As long as the temple stood, music hallowed its services; and that music must have been supremely grand which suited the divine poetry of the inspired and kingly lyricist. Israel was scattered—the temple was no more. Silence and desolation dwelt in the place of the sanctuary. Zion heard no longer the anthems of her Levites.—A new word that was spoken first in Jerusalem had gone forth among the nations; and that too had its music. At first it was a whisper among the lowly in the dwellings of the poor. Stealthily it afterwards was murmured in the palace of the Cæsars. In the dead night, in the depths of the catacombs, it trembled in subdued melodies filled with the love of Jesus. At length the grand cathedral arose, and the stately spire; courts and arches echoed, and pillars shook with the thunder of the majestic organ, and choirs, sweetly attuned, joined their voices in all the moods and measures of the religious heart, in its most exalted, most profound, most intense experience put into lyrical expression. I know that piety may reject, may repel this form of expression, still these sublime ritual harmonies cannot but give the spirit that sympathizes with them, the sense of a mightier being. But sacred music has power without a ritual. In the rugged hymn, which connects itself, not alone with immortality, but also with the memory of brave saints, there is power. There is power in the hymn in which our fathers joined.—Grand were those rude psalms which once arose amidst the solitude of the Alps. Grand were those religious songs, sung in brave devotion by the persecuted Scotch, in the depths of their moors and their glens. The hundredth psalm, rising in the fulness of three thousand voices up into the clear sky, broken among rocks, prolonged and modulated through valleys, softened over the surface of mountain-guarded lakes, had a grandeur and a majesty, contrasted with which mere art is poverty and meanness. And while thus re-

flecting on sacred music, we think with wonder on the Christian Church—on its power and on its compass. Less than nineteen centuries ago, its first hymn was sung in an upper chamber of Jerusalem; and those who sung it were quickly scattered. And now the Christian hymn is one that never ceases—one that is heard in every tongue; and the whisper of that upper chamber is now a chorus that fills the world.—Rev. Henry Giles.

We Shall Live Forever.

There is in the hearts of men a testimony they shall live forever; a voice that echoes through futurity; a sense that they shall see strange things in another world; thoughts that wander through eternity and find no resting-place. This is a fragment of God's image, a shattered remnant of his immortality, and it is there to testify against us; for if it had been perfect, nothing would be more delightful than to think that we should live forever; to look forward into brighter scenes, and rejoice in the glory that should be revealed. All the gold of Arabia would not be worth one hour's excursion of the mind of man into the regions of futurity. Forever and forever would his mind be reaching forward, and dwelling with fondness upon the thought, that never, from age to age, when time should be no more, should he cease from being.—The pleasures of the spirits that walk to and fro in the light of God's countenance, and circle his throne rejoicing, would crowd his fancy and delight his hopes. Visions of celestial happiness would visit him in dreams of the night, and, compared with the dim and distant perspective of eternity, all earthly things would seem weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable.

But what is the fact? Let every man judge himself, how his natural heart sinks from the contemplation of a future state of being; how he shudders to look into eternity, as into some dreary and bottomless pit. What a cold and dismal thing does immortality appear; and what a refreshment it is to his spirits to withdraw his thoughts from the consideration, and return to his beloved earth! And then, only observe with what eagerness and desperation he gives up soul and body to the pursuit of things which he knows full well will soon be to him as if they had never been. And yet this man, if you ask him the question, would tell you that he expected to live forever; and that, when his body was mouldering in the dust from which it was taken, his soul would plunge into an ocean of spirits without bottom, and without shore. This he would tell you gravely, as a matter of course. And then only observe him for one week, or for one day, or for this day, which has been sanctified for immortal purposes, and you will find his cares, his hopes, his fears, his wishes, his affections, busied and bustling about this little span of earth, and the little measure of time which he occupies, and death finds this immortal being making playthings of sand, and carries him away from them all, into a land where they shall all be forgotten.—Wolfe.

Ignorance of Great Physical Truths.

How few men really believe that they sojourn on a whirling globe, and that each day and year of life is measured by its revolutions, regulating the labor and the repose of every race of being. How few believe that the great luminary of the firmament, whose restless activity they daily witness, is an immoveable star, controlling, by its solid mass, the primary planets which compose our system, and forming the goomon of the great dial which measures the thread of life, the tenure of empires, and the great cycles of the world's change. How few believe that each of the millions of stars—those atoms of light which the telescope can scarcely descry—are the centre of planetary systems that may equal, if not surpass our own? And how very few believe that the solid pavement of the globe, upon which they nightly slumber, is an elastic crust, imprisoning fires and forces which have often burst forth in tremendous energy, and are at this very instant struggling to escape—now finding their way in volcanic fires—now heaving and shaking the earth—now upraising islands and continent, and gathering strength for that final outburst which is to usher in the new heavens and the new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." Were these great physical truths objects of faith as well as deductions of reason, we should lead a better life than we do, and make a quicker preparation for its close.—North British Review.

The Works of God and the Works of Man.

There is a contrast between the works of God and the works of man, which plainly distinguishes the divine and human. Raise your meditation to the system above us, with its central sun, and wheeling orbs. How symmetrical! How simple! How majestic! How changeless! How adapted in all its variegated parts to the perfection of its stupendous whole! Then sink your contemplation to the proudest work of man. How diminutive! How imperfect! How indicative of the little shifts of artifice! How prone to derangement, to the vicissitudes of change, and to the decrepitude of age! Each aspect of the heavens bears on its face the impress of divinity. Nor are the sublunary works of God less distinguished from the works of his creatures. It requires no elaborate study to discover that the house is the production of mortal hands, and that the architect of the mountains is He who hath weighed them in the scales, and the hills in a balance. The bridge that spans the streams is palpably of human structure; the flowing stream below proclaims the workmanship of him who makes "rivers in the desert." Earth's petty master claims as his own the curiously wrought watch; but the observer perceives at a glance that it is the pencil of the Almighty which paints the lilies of the field. God imitates not the works of mortals; nor can the barrier between the human and divine be passed by the brother of the worm. To the authorship of the meanest production of omnipotent power, mortality dare not lay claim; nor will the loftiest production of manhood rashly contend for heavenly origin.—Dr. Griffen.

Christ the Light of the World.

"I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John viii. 12.

God is light, and Christ is "the image of the invisible God;" God of God, Light of light. The visible light of the world is the sun, and Christ is the "Sun of righteousness." One sun enlightens the whole world; so does one Christ, and there needs no more. It is the happiness of those who follow Christ, that they "shall not walk in darkness." Follow Christ, and we shall follow him to heaven.—M. Henry.

Christ and the Gospel are light, and there is no darkness at all in them; if you say that you "know Christ" and his Gospel, and yet keep not "Christ's commandments," but dearly hug your private damning corruptions, "you are liars and the truth is not in you;" you have no acquaintance with the God of light, and the Gospel of light.—Cudworth.

Christ "is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." "In his light shall we see light." Light to see and eschew the ways of sin; light to see and walk in the paths of truth.—Wagan.

Let us be an example of godliness. Let us be a light to them that yet abide in darkness. Let not the name of God be evil spoken of through us. His name is holy: "We be unto the world," saith Christ, "because of offences; for it must needs be that offences come; but we be unto that man by whom the offence cometh." The light of God shines in the darkness of this world. It is the sweet incense and savour of God. Whosoever the breath thereof is received it bringeth life.—Bishop Jewel.

Lord Jesus, thou Light of truth and Sun of righteousness, shed thy bright beams upon my heart, that I may know, and knowing, love thee. Help me, my Strength, by whom I am sustained; shine upon me, my Light, by whom alone I see; and quicken me, my Life, by whom alone I live. For thou only art my Help and my Light, my Life and my Joy, my Lord and my God!—St. Augustine.

Aids to Reflection.

Truth is as impossible to be soiled by an outward touch as the sunbeam.—Milton.

Time, with all its celerity, moves slowly on to him whose whole employment is to watch its flight.—Johnson.

Neglect nothing to secure your eternal peace more than if you had been certified you should die within the day; nor mind anything that your secular obligations and duties demand of you less than if you had been insured to live fifty years more.—Dr. Cheyne.

Be sure to mend that in thyself which thou observest dost exceedingly displease thee in others.—Bishop Patrick.

What astonishing beings would we be, could we effect all that we wish; or, perhaps, the will is not sincere that does not effect its desire.—David Scott.