

The Christian Visitor.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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THE TEACHING OF THE HOLY GHOST A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MAY 13TH, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON, AT EXETER HALL, STRAND, LONDON.

11. And now I come to the second point, which was this—THE METHODS BY WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES GOD'S CHILDREN THESE PRECIOUS THINGS.

Here we must remark that we know nothing of the precise way of operation, because the Spirit is mysterious; we know not whence he cometh nor whether he goeth. But still let us describe what we can perceive. And first, in teaching God's people, one of the first things the Spirit does is to excite interest in their minds. I frequently find that when men are being educated for the ministry, the hardest thing is to set them going. They are like bats on the ground; if once a bat gets to the top of a stone and gets a little above the earth, and then he gets wings and can fly well enough. So there are many who have not got their energies aroused; they have talent but it is asleep; and we want a kind of railway-whistle to blow in their ears to make them start up and rub away the film from their eyes so that they may see. Now it is just so with men, when the Spirit of God begins to teach them. He excites their interest in the things which he wishes them to learn; he shows them that these things have a personal bearing upon their present and eternal welfare. He so brings precious truth home that what the man thought was utterly indifferent yesterday, he now begins to esteem inestimably precious. "Oh!" said he, "theology! of what use can it be to me?" But now the knowledge of Christ and him crucified has become to him the most desirable and excellent of all sciences. The Holy Spirit awakens his interest.

That done, he gives to the man a teachable spirit. There he men who, but for this very reason, he loves that they want to know, but you never found the right way of teaching them. Teach them by little and little, and they say—"Do you think I am a child?" Tell them a great deal at once, and they say—"You have not the power to make me comprehend!" till I have been compelled sometimes to say to a man, when I have been trying to make him understand, and he has said, "I cannot understand you." Well, sir, I am thankful it is not my duty to give you an understanding if you have none. Now, the Holy Spirit makes a man willing to learn in any shape. The disciple sits down at the feet of Christ; and let Christ speak as he may, and teach him as he will, whether with a rod or with a smile, he is quite willing to learn. Distasteful lessons are, but the regenerated pupil loves to learn best the very things he once hated. Cutting to his pride the doctrines of the gospel, each one of them may be, but for this very reason, he loves them; for he craves, "Lord, humble me. Lord, bring me down; teach me those things that will make me cover my head with dust and ashes; show me my nothingness; teach me my emptiness; reveal to me my filthiness." So that the Holy Spirit thus proceeds with his work—awakening interest, and enkindling a teachable spirit. This done, the Holy Ghost, in the next place, sets truth in a clear light. How hard it is sometimes to state a fact when you perfectly understand yourself, in such a way that another man may see it. It is like the telescope; there are many persons who are disappointed with a telescope, because whenever they walk into an observatory, and put their eye to the glass, expecting to see the rings of Saturn, and the belts of Jupiter, they have said, "I can see nothing at all; a piece of glass, and a grain or two of dust is all I can see!" But, says the astronomer, when he comes, "I can see Saturn in all her glory. Why cannot you? Because the focus does not suit the stranger's eye." By a little skill the focus can be altered, so that the observer may be able to see what he could not see before. So it is with language; it is a sort of telescope by which I enable another to see my thoughts, but I cannot always give him the right focus. Now the Holy Spirit always gives the right focus to every truth. He sheds a light so strong and forcible upon the Word, that the spirit says, "Now I see it, now I understand it."

For even here, in this precious Book, there are words which I have looked at a hundred times, but I could not understand them, till at some favoured hour, the key-word seemed as if it leaped up from the midst of the verse and said to me, "Look at the verse in my light," and at once I perceived—not always from a word in the verse itself, but sometimes in the context—I perceived the meaning which I could not see before. This, too, is a part of the Spirit's training;—to shed a light upon truth. But the Spirit not only enlightens the truth, but he enlightens the understander. This marvelous tool, the Holy Ghost does teach men, not without saying anything which might be grieved at, but I do not say to-day, but they are not out of the place—some brethren whose opinion I would not take in anything worldly on any account. If it were any thing to do with pounds, shillings, and pence, anything where human judgment was concerned, I should not consult them; but those men have a deeper, truer, and more experimental knowledge of the Word of God, than many who preach it, because the Holy Spirit never tried to teach them grammar, and never meant to teach them business—never wanted to teach them astronomy, but he has taught them the Word of God, and they understand it. Other teachers have laboured to beat the elements of science into them, but without success, for they are as thick and addled in their brains as they can well be, but the Holy Spirit has taught them the Word of God, and they are clear enough there. I came in close contact with some young men. When we are taking our lessons for illustration of the sciences, they seem to be all confused, and when I ask them a question to see if they have understood, they are lost; but, mark you, when we come to read a chapter out of some old puritanic book—come to theology—those brethren give me the smartest and sharpest answers of the whole class. When we once come to deal with things experimental and controversial, I find those men are able to double up their opponents, and vanquish them at once, because they are deeply read in the Word of God. The spirit has taught them the things of Christ, but he has not taught them anything else. I have perceived, also, that when the Spirit of God has enlarged the understanding to receive Bible truth, that understanding becomes more capable of receiving other truth. I heard, some time ago, from a brother minister, when he

were comparing notes, the story of a man who had been the dullest creature that was known. He was not more than one grade above an idiot, but when he was converted to God, one of the first things he wanted to do, was to read the Bible. They had a long, long talk to teach him a verse, but he would learn it; he would master it. He stuck at it as hard as ever he could, till he was able to read. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That man was by-and-by asked to engage in prayer. At first he hardly put a sentence together. By-and-by he arrived at a considerable degree of fluency, because he would do it. He would not stand still, he said, in the prayer-meeting, and not have a word to say for his Master. He began to read his Bible much, and to pray with a great deal of profit and acceptableness, to those that heard, and after a while, he actually began to speak in the villages, and became sometime after an honoured and acceptable pastor of one of our Baptist Churches. Had it not been for the Spirit of God first, expanding the understanding to receive religious truth, that understanding might have been cramped, and fettered, and fast bolted to this very day, and the man might have been ever after an idiot, and so have gone down to his grave while now he stands up to tell to sinners round, in burning language, the story of the cross of Christ. The Spirit teaches us by enlightening the understanding.

Let I weary you, let me hurry on through the other points. He teaches us also by refreshing the memory. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance." He puts all those old treasures into the ark of our soul, and when the time comes, he opens it, and brings out these precious things in right good order, and shows them to us as we need them. He refreshes the memory, and when this is done, he does better, he teaches us the Word, by making us feel its effect, and that, after all, is the best way of learning. You may try to teach a child the meaning of the term "sweetness"; but words will not avail, give him some honey and he will never forget it. You might seek to tell him of the glorious mountains, and the Alps, that pierce the clouds, and send their snows peaks, like white-robed ambassadors up to the courts of heaven; take him there; let him see them, and he will never forget them. You might seek to paint to him the grandeur of the American continent, with its hills, and lakes, and rivers, such as the world saw not before; let him go and view it, and he will know more of the land than he could know by all your teaching, when he sits at home. So the Holy Spirit does not only tell us of Christ's love; he sheds it abroad in the heart. He does not merely tell us of the sweetness of pardon; but he gives us a sense of no condemnation, and then we know all about it, better than we could have done by any teaching of words and ways the banner of love over us. He bids us visit the garden of Gethsemane, and makes us lie among the lilies. He gives us that bundle of camphire, even our beloved, and bids us place it all night betwixt our breasts. He takes us to the cross of Christ, and he bids us put our finger into the print of the nails, and our hands into his side, and tells us not to be "faithless, but believing," and so in the highest and most effectual manner he teacheth us to profit.

III. But now I shall come to my third point, although I feel as if I wished my subject were somewhat less comprehensive, but indeed it is a fault which does not often happen—to have too much rather than too little to speak of, except when we come upon a topic where God is to be glorified, and here indeed our tongue must be like the pen of a ready writer, when we speak of the things that we have made touching the King.

I am now to speak to you about the CHARACTERISTICS AND NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S TEACHING. And first I would remark that the Holy Ghost teaches sovereignly. He teaches whom he pleases. He takes the fool and makes him king, the wonders of the dying love of Christ, to bring aspiring wisdom low and make the pride of man humble and abase itself. And as the Spirit teaches whom he wills, so he teaches when he wills. He has his own hours of instruction, and he will not be limited and bound by us. And then again he teaches as he wills—some by affliction, some by communion, some he teaches by the Word read, some by the Word spoken, some by neither, but directly by his own agency. And so as the Holy Spirit is a sovereign in that he teaches in whatever degree he pleases. He will make one man learn much, while another comprehends but little. Some Christians wear their hearts early—they come to a rapid and high degree of maturity, and that on a sudden, while others creep but slowly to the goal, and are very long in reaching it. Some Christians in early years understand more than others whose hairs have turned grey. The Holy Ghost is a sovereign. He does not have all his pupils in one school, and teach them all the same lesson by simultaneous instruction; but each man is in a separate class, each man learning a separate lesson. Some beginning at the end of the book, some at the beginning, and some in the middle—some learning one doctrine and some another, some going backward and some forwards.

The Holy Spirit teacheth sovereignly, and giveth to every man according as he wills; but then were ever he teaches at all he teaches effectually. He never failed to make us learn, yea, no scholar was ever turned out of the Spirit's school incorrigible. He teaches all his children, not some of them—"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."—the last sentence being a proof that they have been effectually taught. Never once did the Spirit bring home the truth to the heart and yet that heart fail to receive it. He has modes of touching the secret springs of life, and putting the truth in the very core of the being. He sends his healing mixtures into the fountain itself, and not into the stream. We instruct the ear, and the ear is far removed from the heart; he teaches the heart itself, and therefore his every word falleth upon the good soil, and bringeth forth good and abundant fruit—he teaches effectually. Dear brother, do you feel yourself to be a great fool sometimes? Your great Schoolmaster will make a good scholar of you yet. He will so teach you, that you shall be able to enter the kingdom of heaven knowing as much as the brightest saints. Teaching thus sovereignly and effectually, I may add, he teaches infallibly. We teach you errors, through want of caution, sometimes through over zeal, and again through the weakness of our own mind. In the greatest preacher or teacher that ever lived there was some degree of error; and hence our hearers should always bring what we say to the law and the testimony; but the Holy Ghost never teaches error; if thou hast

learned anything of the Spirit of God, it is pure, unadulterated, undiluted truth. Put thyself daily under his teaching, and thou shalt never learn a word amiss, nor a thought avary, but become infallibly taught, well taught in the whole truth as it is in Jesus.

Further, where the Spirit thus teaches infallibly he teaches continually. Whom once he teaches, he never leaves till he has completed their education. On, and on, and on, however dull the scholar, however frail the memory, however vitiated the mind, he still continues with his gracious work, till he has trained us up and made us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Nor does he leave us till he has taught us completely; for as our text says, "He shall teach you all things." There is not a truth so high that it shall not yet be mastered, nor a doctrine so hard that it shall not yet be mastered. High up, high up, tower the heights of the hill of knowledge, but there, even there, thy feet shall stand. Weary may be the way and weak thy knees, but up thither thou shalt climb, and one day with thy forehead bathed in the sunlight of heaven, thy soul shall stand and look down on tempests, mists and all earth's clouds and smoke, and see the Master face to face, and be like him, and know him as he is. This is the joy of the Christian, that he shall be completely taught, and that the Holy Spirit will never give him up till he has taught him all truth.

I fear, however, that this morning I weary you. Such a theme as this will not be likely to be suitable to all minds. As I have already said, the spiritual mind alone receiveth spiritual things, and the doctrine of the Spirit's agency will never be very interesting to those who are entire strangers to it. I could not make another man understand the force of an electric shock unless he has felt it. It would not be likely at all that he would believe in those secret energies which move the world, unless he had some means of testing for himself. And those of you that never felt the Spirit's energy, are as much strangers to it as a stone would be. You are out of your element when you hear of the Spirit. You know nothing of his divine power; you have never been taught of him, and therefore how you should be careful to know what truth he teaches?

I close therefore with this sorrowful reflection. Alas, alas, a thousand times alas, that there should be so many who know not their danger, who feel not their load, and in whose heart the light of the Holy Ghost hat never shone! Is it your case my dear hearer, this morning? I do not ask you whether you have been ever educated in the school of learning; that you may be and you may have taken your degree and been first class in honours, but you may still be as the wild ass's colt that knows nothing about these things. Religion, and the truth of it, is not to be learned by the head. Years of reading hours of assiduous study will never make a man a Christian. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Oh! art thou destitute of the Spirit of the living God? For oh! I charge thee to remember this hearer: if in thy soul the mysterious and supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit has never been shed abroad, thou art an utter stranger to all the things of God. The promises are not thine; heaven is not thine; thou art on thy road to the land of the dead, to the region of the corpse, where their own worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched. Oh that the Spirit of God may rest upon you now!—Bethink you, you are absolutely dependant upon his influence. You are in God's hand to-day to be saved or to be lost—not in your own hands but in his. You are dead in sins; unless he quickens you, you must remain so. The moth beneath your flag is not more absolutely at your mercy than you are now at the mercy of God. Let him but will to leave you as you are, and you are lost; but oh! if mercy speaks and says, "Let that man live," you are saved. I would that you could feel the weight of this tremendous doctrine of sovereignty. It is like the hammer of Thor, it may shake your heart, however stout it be, and make your rocky soul tremble to its base.

"Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown, Hang on his firm decree."

Your destiny hangs there now; and will you rebel against the God in whose hand your souls are? Will you rebel? Will you lift the puny hand of your rebellion against him who alone can quicken you—without whose gracious energy you are dead, and must be destroyed? Will you go this day and sin against light and against knowledge? Will you go to-day and reject mercy which is proclaimed to you in Christ Jesus? If so, no fool was ever so mad as you are, to reject him without whom you are dead, and lost and almost ruined. Oh that instead thereof there may be the sweet whisper of the spirit saying—"Obey the divine command; believe on Christ and live!" Hear thou the voice of Jehovah who cries, "This is the commandment, that ye believe in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Thus obedient, God saith within himself, "I have set my love upon him, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high because he hath known my name," and you shall yet live to sing in heaven of that sovereignty which when your soul trembles in the balances, decided for your salvation, and gave you light and joy unpeakable. Jesus Christ, the son of God died on Calvary's cross, "and whosoever believeth on him shall be saved." Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence." Believe that record true; cast down your weapons; yield to the sovereignty of the Holy Ghost; and he shall assuredly prove to you that, in that very yielding, there was a proof that he loved you; for he made you yield; he made you willing to bow before him in the day of his power. May the Holy Spirit now rest on the word I have spoken, for Jesus sake!

Four Presidential tickets are in the field. First, the Republican, with Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, for President, and Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, for Vice-President. Second, the regular Democratic ticket, with Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, for President, and Herschel V. Johnson, of Georgia, for Vice-President (in place of Benjamin Fitzpatrick, of Alabama, who declined). Third, the irregular Democratic ticket, with John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, for President, and Joseph Lane, of Oregon, for Vice-President. Fourth, the Constitutional Union ticket, with John Bell, of Tennessee, for President, and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, for Vice-President. Gen. Houston is also running on his own hook in Texas.

For the "Christian Visitor." LETTER FROM THE G. W. P. NEW YORK ON SUNDAY—BEECHER AND CHAPIN WALT WHITMAN AND GREELY—CENTRAL PARK.

MESSRS. EDITORS.—I grasp a leisure moment to fulfil my promise by giving you a few paragraphs concerning my Sunday in New York, and other miscellaneous matters in that city incident to ten days sojourning there, supplementary to my former letters.

My morning was occupied in a trip to the quiet, handsome and promising City of Brooklyn, the immediate theatre of the labors and renown of HENRY WARD BEECHER. At an early hour his church was crowded to excess, every available space completely occupied. The exterior and interior of the building are plain and unostentatious, within accommodating say three thousand.

The preliminary services were also simple and impressive; and shortly after, the great Divine of the Republic announced his text—"For ye are dead, and your life is hid in Christ." The whole discourse turned upon the *Two Lives*,—or, rather upon this hope as the mere infancy and scarcely that, of the Eternal Life. The discourse was profound and beautiful. But it is not by the mere artillery of rhetoric that Beecher excels; his sentences are e short, nervous, pithy—but his wonderful power of illustration gives you a complete insight into, and conception of the deep truths he is fixing upon your mind. He is in equal amusing, and thrusts severely at those who go crying through this beautiful world. His allusion to death was really charming—and bereft synthetized King of half his terrors; and he spoke with great eloquence and fervor, of men who mourn without hope over the grave. The tomb is the vestibule of ineffable glory to the believer. We should not mourn when God takes the young Home; it was like the husbandman who going into his fields found his grain golden and ripe a month earlier than usual and therefore sat down and wept! for God but walked into the vineyard of Nature and shook the tree of Eternal Life and the blessed youths fell as mellow fruitage fit to be garnered for the Banquet of Glory; we should rejoice; we should bind the cradles with grape and yew, and strew bright flowers around the graves of the early dead. The sermon was replete with beauties, and concluded with a most exquisite funeral allusion to the late death of a young female member which brought tears to many cheeks and the hands to many eyes. My impressions were all favorable. Beecher is apparently in the prime of life; of medium height, stoutish, close shaven, open and genial countenance, expansive brow, and long black hair thrown behind the ears.

Dr. Chapin's Church is a beautiful Gothic structure, in New York City Proper; a large audience was in attendance. He is about the same height and build as Beecher, so far as I could judge of them in the pulpit. Dr. Chapin conducted the service, he is a very impressive reader, and reminds you in that respect of the Rev. Rector of Portland (Mr. Harrison) every tone. In preaching, however, Chapin's voice loses this mellowness. The Doctor carries a large American beard of black, has a good countenance and an impressive manner. His discourse was very heavy—unimpassioned—dis from the text: "Go to the ant thou sluggard" The Doctor had written and now read his sermon, but it was evidently prepared for the press, not for the congregation. True, it was chastely written, but there was a lack of originality, of power of thought, of heart-touchingness, and a straining after rhetorical effect. His friends who accompanied me were equally disappointed with me, and appeared very sorry their distinguished man, had been (as he was) heavy, pedantic, and uninteresting.

My evening after Dr. CHAPIN'S sermon was, I confess, very wickedly spent. I had been started to find business largely transacted in many localities, but judge my amazement to find the "night rendered hideous" by the most blasphemous of bacchanalian orgies. I visited briefly some six places, types of hundreds. The front of one type, as I have said, was in a full blaze of illumination, and strains of music burst from every window and door. You enter, and a vast hall, on the ground floor, is before you brilliantly lighted—tables at every step crowded with liquors, principally lager beer—surrounded by say 1500 smiling, rollicking, rowdying men and women, apparitly respectable. Cards, dice, shooting galleries, &c., in full blast; a nona woman appears, and sings a song, the Band takes up the strain, and the curtain rises, and exhibits a theatrical performance in full operation! You grow sick, and yet these "entertainments," or similar ones, "enjoyed" with fancy dances, commence at 11 o'clock on Sabbath morning, and close not till the hours of Sunday have fled in disgust! I never conceived anything so vile before. I really felt indignant as I watched momentarily a mother carrying an infant of about nine months, the little thing lying helplessly in her arms, his little head thrown back, his eyes staring around idiotically, the whole child saturated, drunk, on lager! It is fair to say, all this is done directly by the foreign population; but the corrupt authorities have so long winked at it, for the sake of votes, that Sunday desecration has become a power, armed with wealth, and determined to fight its way to the bitter end. An effort is now making to close the Theatres on Sunday, a poor, partial, and in all probability, impotent

effort; at least so long as this degraded influence has thousands of votes at the disposal of corrupt and heaven-despising politicians. But enough of this.

I had the pleasure of an introduction to Walt Whitman, the American Poet, who has just issued his sensation Poem "Leaves of Grass." He is an executive genius—with hairs prematurely grey—and of odd hermitish personal. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the first of American Critics, wrote a very flattering letter to Whitman, and journeyed all the way to Brooklyn to do honor to the Poet. "The Leaves of Grass" form an extraordinary poem; the leaders of the Press extol it, the small fry have dragged it, much to Whitman's amusement.

A short chat with Horace Greeley deserves mention. Horace's general getting up is decidedly racy; boots which have not been allowed to participate in the luxury of Japan's Polish, pans of antique construction, coat of the long-tailed Shanghai style and a shocking bad hat slouched on the back of his head. He has a large, round, bare, milk-and-water face, with a small supply of white-brown thread called hair. But you find a great man under all this nonsensical parade of eccentricity; and his huge forehead surges about and his whole face becomes illuminated by his smile, as he talks with general and unaffected ease.

Central Park promises to be a most beautiful place. It is now merely laid out, although pleasant lawns are appearing. Eight thousand men have been employed, and not much less than that number continue at work. Five years (at least) must elapse and New York will have the Park of America—and no mean member of the universal family of Parks. Three swans remain and swim around the lake with majestic unconcern. The old Battery grounds are almost deserted; Palace Garden is a pleasant place.

Broadway surges with people—and from one visible end to the other you can see nothing but an unbroken dense cloud of hacks, omnibuses, carts, men, women, children, and living things. I have seen several corps of the citizen soldiery on Broadway presenting a splendid appearance. I have many notes of my stay in Boston and New York, but it would be impossible and unable to transcribe them. I shall, therefore, leave them behind, and resume when I have time, at the Hudson, and journey, via, Niagara Falls, through Canada, to "Home, Sweet Home!" Yours fraternally, G. W. P.

July 2nd, 1860.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The estimated population of the United States for 1860 is 31,500,000, divided thus: free whites 27,000,000 colored slave, 4,000,000, colored free 500,000. The population of New England is estimated at 3,250,000, divided thus: Maine 700,000, New Hampshire 350,000, Vermont 350,000, Massachusetts 1,200,000, Connecticut 410,000, Rhode Island 180,000. In the apportioning of representatives the old and large States will, without exception, lose ground, relatively, the South loses ground largely. The Northwest gains positively. "Westward the star of empire takes its way" is no longer poetry but sober fact—and not only westward, but northward is the course of empire.

The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, now properly called the Kingdom of Naples, has an area nearly the size of the State of New-York, and a population of about 9,000,000. The Continental portion contains about 31,000 square miles, and the Island of Sicily has an area of 10,508 square miles. The Island is the finest and most important of the Mediterranean, and is larger in extent than Massachusetts and Rhode Island combined, and the population is about equal in numbers to that of the six New-England States. The city of Palermo is about the same rank in population with Boston.

Garibaldi lately, in reply to the students of the University of Pavia, thus spoke of the cause of his country's ruin:—"In the midst of Italy, at its very heart, there is a cancer called Popery—an imposture called Popery. Yes, young men, we still have a formidable enemy, the more formidable because it exists among the ignorant classes, where it rules by falsehood! because it is sacrilegiously covered with the cloak of religion. Its smile is the smile of Satan. The enemy, young men, is the priest—the priest, with few exceptions."

The "British Standard" gives a list of one hundred and twenty-five members of the University of Oxford, who have gone over from the Established Church to the Roman Catholic Church; They consist of two archdeacons, eighty-four other clergymen, and thirty-nine laymen. Baltimore is now estimated to number nearly 300,000 inhabitants. Many improvements have recently been made in the city, and an immense park of 500 acres is soon to be laid out. The Boulevards, a magnificent avenue around the city to be 13 miles long, is already commenced.

The Rev. J. S. Harden, under sentence of death at Belvidere, N. J., for the murder of his wife by poison, has made a confession of his crime. The efforts of his friends to obtain a commutation of punishment have failed. The Governor, has granted a short respite, at the expiration of which the law takes its course. His old father has spent all his property in endeavoring to save him—about six thousand dollars.

The Bible has been translated into 200 languages and dialects, and is ready for 600,000,000 of the inhabitants of the earth; but only 100,000,000 have, as yet, received it.

Agricultural, Etc.

A VEGETABLE PESTILENCE. A correspondent of the "Cincinnati Gazette" who claims to have been favorably situated for more than half a century for making observations upon the disease effecting fruit culture and other vegetation—potatoes, corn, and other cereals—claims that all these fruits—pears, cherries, apple, quince, &c., together with other vegetation have been injured or destroyed by the same disease, or general causes operating for a series of years, independent of any other cause affecting vegetation. He thinks it is to be inferred, from the mode of attack upon different fruits and trees, first affecting the fruit for a year or two, commencing with a small speck and extending to the whole fruit, which would decay or dry up in the vine for a year or two; then the tree or vine would show marks of disease, and entirely die, or linger a few years longer, producing fruit comparatively worthless, an occasional tree appearing to recover partially. The similar mode of its attack upon various fruits; also the similar extremely bitter taste of the diseased fruit of different kinds, are strong indications of the unity of the disease; hence the term of bitter rot in fruit has become common to the disease.

He says:—Such have been the effects of this vegetable malady for several years past in this county, and I think the remark will apply to a large portion of the State, that three-fourths of the apple orchards are destroyed or rendered comparatively worthless; and nine-tenths of the peaches, choice varieties of cherries, plums, quinces pears and grape vines are entirely gone; so that it is idle for us to talk about fruit crops with the expectation of having more than a very scanty supply for some years to come. The wild grape, plum and crab apple have been similarly affected to the cultivated; and I would observe in this connection that it has been remarked that an unusual amount of forest timber has been dying the last six or eight years, and much of it the younger and thrifter growth, and that not only in reserved groves of timber in the older parts of the State, but in the more extensive timber regions of the northwestern counties.

Our cereal crops have not entirely escaped the pestilence. With all the improvements in cultivation and agricultural implements, and the increased extent of cultivated soil, the statistics of the grain crops of Ohio show a diminution of some twenty-five per cent for the last eight or ten years. The effects of disease were most visible in the years 1855, 1857 and 1859, in the corn crop—perhaps most plainly marked in '57, when the season appeared favorable for a full crop. The corn had its full growth and apparent maturity up to the middle of September, with the kernel hard, when the whole plant appeared to remain stationary and not fully mature as usual. Light frost arrived about the middle of October, but no frost to affect the stalk till the middle of November. Early in October, the corn was noticed to be decaying at the cob, the stalk and corn remaining stationary and not maturing as usual—the corn rotting at the cob, and one-half of the crop estimated going to waste under the best management. From the peculiar condition of the crop, some farmers gave it the title of the cob rot, early and late corn were equally affected, and corn cut up for fodder did not mature any better, shewing a condition of the crop never before witnessed under such circumstances, and by no means to be accounted for by the lateness of the season or by the effects of frost.

The corn crop of 1859 appeared to be effected by some morbid influence, independent of the late frost of the season, from which there was only about half a crop. This led some to remark that the Miami and Scioto bottoms have lost their fertility, which I think incorer, as newer lands were equally deficient in crop as the older cultivated bottom lands.

The oat crop of 1858 appeared to be nearly destroyed by the same disease. The season was favorable to its growth till the middle of June. When half grown it blighted and did not produce the fourth of a crop. It was reported as affected with rust, but there was no rust upon it, and I am satisfied from careful observation it was the general vegetable pestilence that injured the crop.

I am aware of the many explanations that have been given to the public from time to time of the destruction of fruit trees, and the difficulty of fruit culture. None of them have been satisfactory. Our state abounds in nurseries, and great attention has been paid to the setting out and care of fruit trees in place of declining ones. It has, however, been a discouraging business, as more than three-fourths of the fruit trees of all kinds set out the last six or eight years, have died in a year or two, similarly affected as other trees, and an examination of nursery trees, has shown many of them diseased also.

It, with all the advantages of modern science in the management of fruit culture for the last ten years, it has been continually on the decline, it is time to review our theories and endeavor to ascertain the true source of the difficulty.—Practical Farmer.