

lifetime so much as give one quickening touch to a human heart, communicate from a glowing flame one living spark of heavenly fire, or thrill the soul with one burning word of holy love! But some there are who do this, and do it without effort, even without consciousness. It is part of the Father's reward for the sincerity of their secret devotion.

There is one little sentence in the private papers of Channing, — so brief, so covered, so shut in, in the connection in which it stands, that it almost escapes notice, and looks as if the humility that wrote it was so profound and so modest, that it instinctively hid this perfect and priceless miniature of itself, — there is one little sentence that tells the whole history of his surpassing influence, — a history that all men can now clearly understand, since the rich secrets of his closet have been spread out to the light of day. "*Let no man know.*" That is every word. "*Let no man know.*" And all men *do* know; for the Father who seeth in secret has rewarded his servant openly. They know and they *did* know. The voice told the rich secret, the eye gave knowledge of it, the whole countenance disclosed it; and more impressively, the lofty character, the high discourse, the sentences which sounded like oracles, the instructions which seemed like fresh messages of God through his preacher's lips.

All religious fruitfulness, all outward religious life, all lovely manifestations of a lovely spirit, flow from the secrecy of God, through the privacy of the closet, — are the open reward of secret prayer. There may be, it is true, all the *appearances* of religious vitality in a Christian body, — the reward of diligence and skill directed to ap-