

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,  
Scenes of accomplished bliss! which who can  
see,

Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy?  
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,  
And clothe all climes in beauty. The reproach  
Of barrenness is past; the fruitful field  
Laughs with abundance; and the land, once  
lean,

Or fertile only in its own disgrace,  
Exults to see its thistly curse repealed.  
The various seasons woven into one  
And that one season an eternal spring."

"One song employs all nations and all cry,  
Worthy the LAMB for He was slain for us!"

Where the throne of God and of the Lamb  
is,—where His servants serve Him,—where  
they see His face,—where His name is in  
their foreheads,—there is no room for the  
CURSE or any of the consequences of sin.

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### UNITED PRAYER.

Five years ago a Presbyterian minister in the town of Lodianna, North India, issued an appeal to the Christian world for united prayer on the first week of the year. The proposal met with a universal and most cordial response. Men of every kindred, tongue, and nation, from the lonely islands of the Pacific to the great and busy cities of Europe and America, united for one week in confessing common sin and imploring common blessings. Christians met on common ground at the footstool of God. Delightful communion was enjoyed by those who seldom met before—even the communion of saints in the love and service of the one blessed Redeemer. Barriers of cold selfishness were swept away. Love seized the sceptre, and swayed it benignly over Protestant Christendom.

Year by year, ever since, all evangelical christians have joined in public and private prayer during the first week of the year. 1864 has been thus inaugurated; and at no previous period were the meetings better attended or more profoundly interesting to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. Now in one church, now in another; now in public Halls, christian ministers and laymen met and prayed and sang God's praises, read His word and preached the blessed Gospel or listened to its gracious invitations.

Not in cities and towns alone, but in rural districts have these meetings been held and the same broad, bright features characterize them everywhere. God has heard our prayers! A spirit of unity and of fervent supplication has been poured out upon the churches. The Presbyterian Churches of Halifax have held a series of United Prayer Meetings among themselves after the close of the Week of Prayer. These have been peculiarly delightful. Ministers, office-bearers and members of the five Presbyterian congregations have taken part in them; and every succeeding assemblage seemed more solemnly attractive than the other.

It is notorious that in some branches of the Protestant Church, heresy is coming in like a flood, and threatening even the foundations of the faith. Men high in office and of great influence are forsaking the only foundation and following the conceits of of man's wisdom; and thus multitudes are scandalized and led astray. In these critical times, how significant, how eminently appropriate a week of universal, united Prayer! When the Enemy musters his forces in battle array and, led by deserters from the Lord's camp, threatens to assault the strong bulwarks of Zion, how cheering the thought that the Lord's arm is not shortened—that the gifts of His Spirit are not stinted—that He is testifying for Himself, wherever two or three are gathered in His name! A praying church is a strong church; it will of necessity be sound in doctrine and active in the discharge of duty. No doubt our own congregations have generally engaged in special prayer during the first week of last month. It was well thus to commence the New-Year: but, Brethren, relinquish not the holy struggle! Pray without ceasing. Let this be a year of prayer, and a year of work. So much nearer the coming of our Lord than ever before, or than any of the generations that have laboured and prayed before us,—let us also be so much the more earnest in preparing to meet Him; for in such an hour as we think not He cometh!

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