

secondly, a well filled and instructive letter from the apostle's pen ; thirdly, a visit and edifying ministering from the faithful Tychicus ; fourthly, continuous labours by the prudent and zealous Timothy, who is by the apostle besought to *abide* at Ephesus. I am fully apprized of the fact that the modest Timothy has been turned into a Bishop by our Episcopal friends, and again, that he has been transformed into a "settled pastor" by our Baptist and Congregational friends. With these ecclesiastical oddities I am not now dealing. And some of these labours, after Paul leaves the Ephesian congregation, as can be shown, were subsequent to the appointment of elders.

I shall, at any time, beloved brother Sillars, be pleased to hear from you either on this topic or any other you may choose ; and I may guarantee for you a good hearing on the part of all the readers of this periodical, who, I am happy to say, are yearly increasing in this western country.

Your brother in the Lord,

D. OLIPHANT.

PRAYER.

WERE I by accident to discover my enemy in the closet, the dell or the grove, engaged in secret prayer to God, it would induce me at once to suspect the integrity of my conduct toward him. I should be much inclined to suspect myself in the wrong—to suppose that he had some real ground of grievance. I should conclude certainly, that he would be willing to meet me again in the sacred domain of friendship ; that he would be ready to forgive. And why this ? If in my own bosom there rankled disaffection and hatred, would I not be disarmed ?

But men do not pray in secret—never, never. All men reach this conclusion by a sort of instinct. They *know* that whoever in solitude seeks communion with the Almighty, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with allowance, must be hungering and thirsting after righteousness. The man who prays in secret knows that if he regards iniquity in his heart, the Lord will not hear him ; and few men will trouble themselves to mock God in secret. It is a profitless task and much worse than profitless. The man who is not seeking after inward holiness—purity of heart, can not enjoy secret prayer. Hence, whenever we begin to slide away from God, prayer becomes irksome, and as the religious affections cool, it is wholly abandoned ; apoplexy of the spiritual man and death ensue.

There is a strange power in prayer ; it is God's appointed means of bringing his children, now in exile, home. It gives strength to the feeble, courage to the timid, hope to the downcast. It is the Christian's *talisman*—the shield of the young, the staff of the old. And yet, how apt are we, in the hurry and intoxication of life, to forget that God is the hearer of prayer. Our fathers used to sing—

"What various hindrances we meet,

In coming to the mercy-seat ;"

And we might fitly catch and prolong the strain.

Intending these paragraphs for such as do not read long articles, we shall here close.—*Pinkerton*.