

PRAYER THE SOURCE OF POWER.



S another illustration of this important truth, we may add this story which is told of Wilberforce. He was introduced by his uncle, when only twelve years old, to the good John Newton. Fifteen years after, when his life had been dedicated to the Master, he sought again the society of this excellent minister. What was his surprise to learn that from that early introduction Mr. Newton had never ceased to pray for him in private! And how was the good man's heart gladdened to see this blessed answer to his prayer of fifteen years!

Oh, it is prayer that engages God on the side of the teacher, and clothes his word with enlightening, regenerating, saving power. Let us never forget that. It secures those conditions that are favorable to success, it opens the eyes of the understanding to perceive and handle the truth aright, it fills the heart with love, it tunes the tongue to tenderness, it inspires the word spoken with wisdom, and it prepares the heart of the hearer to receive it gladly. We may set this down as an unquestionable fact, and as a grand maxim in all Christian ministry, that a *prayerful teacher is always a powerful teacher.*

It is said that among the high Alps, at certain seasons, the traveller is told to proceed quietly; for on the steep slopes overhead the snow hangs so evenly balanced that the sound of a voice or the report of a gun may destroy the equilibrium and bring down an immense avalanche that will overwhelm everything in ruin in its downward path. And so about our way there may be a soul in the very crisis of its moral history, trembling between life and death, and a mere touch or shadow may determine its destiny. A young woman who was deeply impressed with the truth, and was ready, under conviction of sin, to ask, "What must I do to be saved?" had all her solemn impressions dissipated by the unseemly jesting of a member of the church by her side as she passed out of the sanctuary. Her irreverent and worldly spirit cast a repellant shadow on the young woman not far from the kingdom of God. How important that we should always and everywhere walk worthy of our high calling as Christians.

Two Bagdad Jews have bought the entire site of ancient Babylon. On this *Le Christian Belge* well remarks: "Is it not a significant fact that two Israelites should to-day possess the soil and the ruins of the immense city where their ancestors were captives and slaves, and of which their prophets had announced the utter destruction?"

TORONTO has 35 Anglican, 27 Methodist, 24 Presbyterian, 13 Baptist, 9 Roman, 7 Congregational, 2 Swedenborgian, 2 Jewish, 12 Salvation Army, and 14 miscellaneous churches.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL ON THE SKEPTICS.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, ex-American Minister to England, just before leaving the latter country for the United States, attended a meeting in London to do honor to the poet Browning. Some of those present made addresses in which they aired their skepticism, and said that they could get along without any religion. They did this, though they knew that by so doing they would give offence to many who were there. Mr. Lowell, having the courage of his convictions, paid some attention to these men in his address, and among things equally pertinent and forcible, he said:—

"The worst kind of religion is no religion at all; and these men who live in ease and luxury, indulging themselves in 'the amusement of going without religion,' may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglect hastened the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their bodies like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution. When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet ten miles square, where a decent man can live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating his children, unspoiled and unpoluted; a place where age is revered, infancy respected, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when skeptics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the Gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way, and laid the foundations, and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical *literati* to move thither and then ventilate their views. But so long as these men are dependent upon the religion which they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob the Christian of his hope, and humanity of its faith, in that Saviour who alone has given to man that hope of life eternal which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom."

CRÆSUS—I'm afraid deacon, that we'll have to notify our pastor that his resignation would be accepted if tendered. The Deacon—Why? Don't you think he is an able and faithful expounder of the Word? CRÆSUS—Um! Well, he may be all that, but then you know a cultured congregation like ours, may be willing to believe things, but don't like to hear them mentioned.

READING makes the full man, writing the exact man and speaking the ready man.