

moving, as if repeating the pastor's words, or adding an "Amen!" thereto. But prayer was on every face. How near did God seem in that thrilling silence! Oh! I have been in churches where the minister seemed to pray *for*, if not *to*, the people, while they were standing, sitting, or lying, just as it happened, some staring about, some reading, some asleep, boots creaking, a public expectoration going on in one pew, and the pocket-handkerchief plying its noisiest function in another, and I have thought, "Who would act thus in a company of ladies and gentlemen, or in the Palace of the Queen? and what must God think of it? Poor minister! I don't see how *you* can pray through it all."

The singing was as well ordered. I do not know whether it was very scientific, nor can I remember whether there was a choir or an organ. At all events, there was nothing to offend the ear, and I received the impression that there had been some pains taken to bring God their best in this respect. Every one had a book, and every one stood up to sing as well as he could. No voices were so startlingly loud, that you involuntarily turned round to see whose they were, nor did any one attempt to correct the time of the leader. In one word—it was *worship*, not a performance. There was *heart* in those tones; and you could see the countenance change with each emotion of the song. Ah! it was "pleasant:" such "praise" was "comely."

When the Scriptures were read by the minister, the people opened their bibles too. He recited the words of God "distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading;" and they "heard with meekness the engrafted word, which was able to save their souls." Again there was the hushed stillness I noticed during prayer; for now God was speaking to them, as before they had been speaking to Him. Most impressive was such a reading of the Book!

With like interest was the Gospel preached and heard. It was so preached, that none were tempted to sleep, nor did they. Neither did I see any one even making a sofa of his pew, as I had seen in divers places before. The appearance of the congregation now was not that of an *audience* at a concert or a lecture, looking for an "intellectual treat," or a very lovely song, but a sense of God and Eternity overshadowed them still. I heard much better among them than I had been wont to do.

There was a collection taken up, but so quietly and promptly, while the gifts of the people were so prepared beforehand, that it seemed as much an act of worship as all the rest.

Then I thought how much more skilfully the sexton had done his work than many of his brethren! There had been no rattling of door, stove, or window. But fresh air and sufficient warmth had been noiselessly supplied. And I thanked him, too, in my heart.

When the benediction was pronounced, I was arrested by the unusual pause. There was no snatching of hats, dashing on of overcoats, slamming of doors, or rushing down the aisle; but silently and slowly the Congregation dissolved away, as if lingering about the holy ground. Nor did they at once break out into loud talk or laughter. A few brotherly words were interchanged, but the spell of worship was on them yet, so that they did not plunge back into the world the moment the last Amen was spoken.

Was I awake, or did I dream? Do you ever see the like of this? Shall I ever see it again? I hope I may.