

his success depended largely on their prayers. He also entreated the Colossians to "continue steadfastly in prayer, . . . that I make it manifest as I ought to speak." How like our workers in foreign fields this sounds! We might almost think these were extracts from private letters of our own missionaries.

It has been well said that God rules the world by the prayers of his saints. Volumes might be written of prayers answered in connection with missions. Incidents have been related of wonderful deliverance to missionaries, or greatly needed relief in extremity, linked with petitions offered at the very hour by some distant praying one.

Dr. Pierson says: "It is a remarkable fact, that from the inception of modern missions to the present period, no important stage or step of their development has ever occurred except in connection with prayer." Every time the Church has set herself to praying, there have been stupendous movements in the mission field."

It is fact of wonderful import that God actually places at our disposal the powers of the eternal world. That he gives us the glorious privilege of opening the treasures of heaven upon our missionaries! Oh, how slow of heart we are to believe and to act upon these solemn realities!

A pastor once suggested to his people the embarrassment many Christians would find themselves in on arriving at heaven. A cloud of glorified spirits would gather about the newcomer to learn what was doing for the extension of Christ's kingdom on the earth; but many would be as ignorant of these matters as if they had lived on the moon. "What! were there no papers published to give information on these subjects?" "Yes; but I didn't feel interest enough to read them." "Were there no meetings for the conversion of the world?" Oh, yes; meetings of this sort were held almost at our door, but I never was in the habit of attending them." Such extreme indifference can hardly be supposed to exist now, and yet it is not impossible, is it, that some of our church members, amidst the pressure of daily affairs, give little thought to our missionaries?

Prayer is the one thing available to all God's people. In one of the published letters of the late Professor Phelps we find this testimony to the value of prayer as a means of usefulness: "It is fixed in the everlasting purpose of God that this world is to be converted to Jesus Christ. It is to be brought about mainly by believing prayer. When a man can do nothing else, he can add his little rill to the great river of intercessory prayer which is always rolling up to the throne of God."

Some of us regret we are not able to do what others do, but we can pray. We envy those possessed of wide intellectual ability and commanding talent who stand foremost in the ranks of God's workers; again I repeat, we can pray. In our closet alone with God we may set in motion a wave of spiritual influence which shall be felt in China and the Islands of the Sea, thousands of leagues away! Money may fail to accomplish the purpose for which it was given. Natural talent, even though consecrated, may prove a feeble instrument; but earnest, believing prayer finds its way into the very heart of God, and will prevail with him. He will bestow such measure of his grace and power upon his work and workers as never otherwise could be given. Wonderful thought! In the day when all secrets shall be revealed, there will be some sweet surprises. Among those who have seemed to do the least, will be found

faithful ones whose prayers have wielded a power with God mightier than all other agencies in hastening the coming of his kingdom.

We may linger a moment to consider the effect upon ourselves of the praying habit. It brings us into an intimate acquaintance with our dear Lord, and into close and loving sympathy with his purpose of saving the world. "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits." It makes us grateful for our own place in life, and our Christian environment. It lifts us out of our selfishness, and enlarges our hearts to take in the millions that are in spiritual darkness all over the world. It strengthens our confidence in the Great Promiser; and last, if our prayers are sincere, we shall work for what we pray, and thus answer our own prayers. And as we find the promises of power in prayer made true to us, we shall share in his joy of blessing and saving men.

At our annual meeting last January a stirring appeal was made by our Home Secretary for "aggressive work," especially with reference to the treasury. God's seal was upon this appeal; for, most happily, it was responded to by hundreds and thousands of Christian women in all our branches and auxiliaries, resulting in an advance of nearly twenty per cent in the benevolence of our Board.

Who can predict what marvellous results would appear in the work abroad this coming year, if all the women in all our churches were to enter thoughtfully and believingly into a solemn compact for prayer! I venture, in closing, to quote a portion of a prayer covenant which not long since, was issued by the consecrated edition of the *Missionary Review*:

"We, the undersigned, deeply feeling the reproach and dishonor of the Church of God in the long neglect of the perishing millions of our race, and painfully conscious that unbelief has led to the still worse neglect of believing prayer, do, in the name of Jesus, declare our deep conviction that every believer is responsible before God for the carrying out of our Lord's last command; and we are especially impressed that daily, believing prayer should be offered for the speedy evangelization of this world, and the coming of the Kingdom of God.

"We believe it to be the privilege of all true believers to implore God for the speedy outpouring of his Spirit in a world wide Pentecost of power. And in this faith do we solemnly undertake, in holy agreement before God, however widely separated from each other, to meet each other at the throne of grace in the early morning hours of each day, in earnest and importunate prayer."

My sisters, what do we wait for? *Life and Light.*

"YES YOU DO, LUCINDY."

[One of two papers between which the prize was divided.]

"AS FOR me, I've always said and I say yet, that I don't believe in missions."

"O yes you do, Lucindy. I've been thinking it over considerable lately and I've made up my mind that you believe in missions about as completely as any one I ever saw."

"I know you've got a coaxing tongue in your head, Hannah Sanders, but you're not going to make me own up that it's my duty to scribble myself and neglect my family for the sake of a lot of heathen. I don't believe in it."

"Yes you do, Lucindy. You've often told me how