

The age in which we live is impatient of the transcendental and clamorous for the practical. This is seen in philanthropy, and also in the concentration of attention on the human life of Christ and on the human side of the Divine work in the Scriptures. We must hold with unabated loyalty our confidence in the Spirit's power, and in the boundless resources of our risen Lord, in Whose name He acts, but the want of the time is to realise the absolute necessity of the human agency, not merely to do philanthropic work, but to transmit spiritual power. Many active Christians are still somewhat astray in their prayers for the Spirit. It is almost universal to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit, as if Pentecost had not yet come. People are thus led to look up to heaven, whereas they ought to be engaging their attention with something nearer home. It is not outpouring that is wanted so much as inletting. It is not the windows of heaven that are shut, but our hearts. It is free course for the Spirit's movements from heart to heart that is wanted. There is no obstacle in the line of the perpendicular. It is on the horizontal lines that the block occurs. Human hearts and lives are the conductors of the Spirit, who is close around us all, like the air, pressing for admission; and what is wanted is that these hearts open to Him and make room for Him; and then, themselves changed, allow the gracious current to pass on through them to others. Many seem to think that prayer for the Spirit is like an order on the Divine power, payable in some other place; that one may gather a prayer-meeting in a West End drawing-room, for instance, and ensure the forth-putting of the Spirit's glorious power in the East End without the trouble of going there, even to see that the draft is honoured. Suppose the whole Church gathered together in one vast prayer concert, to unite in the petition "Thy Kingdom come:" in what form should we expect the answer to come? Should we expect a sudden outpouring of the Spirit on the unbelieving world? It was not so when the 120 were "all with one accord in one place." The answer to their prayer was the outpouring of the Spirit on themselves, after which they went out in the power of the Spirit—all of them—to make the Kingdom known. They went in the name of the Lord, in the power of the Lord, His Spirit living in them and working through them. It is the same to-day. It is not enough for the respectable Christian to attend worship every Sunday, pay for missions and even pray for them, if he withholds the one thing needful—the channel to convey the power. If he is not living a spiritual life and exerting a spiritual influence, he not only fails to contribute his share of spiritual force, but is positively blocking the path by which it must pass. The crying need of the time is not money, not prayer, not preaching, not evangelistic effort, but men and women by the tens of thousands to be Christians, to open heart and life to the Spirit's grace; enough of them to create an atmosphere absorbing, retaining and diffusing the light and heat now streaming from the Sun of righteousness, to carry in every direction the Water of Life which would accomplish all the Church's work before this generation passed away.

Come, then, from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon us, that we may rise and stand upon our feet, an exceeding great army to advance against the strongholds of the enemy, and win the whole country for our Lord. This is our prayer to-day. How shall it be answered? Are we ready to open our whole natures now to receive the Holy Spirit in the fulness of His grace and power, to consecrate ourselves—body, soul, and spirit—to be ministers of the Spirit? If we were, who can doubt that there would be the beginning of a rising tide of spiritual life, which might be the earnest of the great consummation, which is the goal of all our efforts and desires?—*Christian Leader*.

A FALSE IDEA.

There are Christians who assert that God will revive His people and save sinners, it matters not what evils stand in the way. I have heard ministers assert this thing. They say that God's work is not going to be hindered by the conduct of men in the Church, even though it be bad. But this is a false idea. While it is true that God does not wait until the Church is perfect, or nearly so, before using it to save sinners, yet it is very possible indeed for leading members to so conduct themselves that the Holy Spirit is quenched and the tide of grace is kept back. Such has been the case in numerous instances. Men of corrupt characters have been placed in prominent positions in the

Church, the Spirit has been grieved thereby, and when the pastor and some of the most spiritual ones have made efforts to secure a revival and a work of salvation, there has been a signal failure. I have known pastors, in the course of a series of meetings, who expressed sad wonder as to why the work was so hedged up, why there was so little of the Spirit's presence; but, knowing as I did the real condition of things, I did not wonder that God refused to honor the efforts of the Church. It was plain enough to me that the failure was owing to the practical approval by the Church, as a whole, and in an organized capacity, of utterly unworthy members who were placed by the votes of the Church in leading offices, and against the protests of those who looked to the spiritual welfare of the Church and the cause of Christ.

I have known even pastors who took part in putting such ones into high office, and I then predicted that so long as such a state of things existed the pastor's work would be choked and neutralized, and it was, as a matter of course. And such a pastor will often lay the blame of the failure to secure a special work of grace upon every thing but the right thing. When will pastors and churches understand that God will not do a mighty work through them when they will insist on placing gross stumbling blocks in His way? Many churches are preventing God from doing for them and for sinners what He wants to accomplish, by tolerating offences in the Church.—C. H. WEATHERBEE, in *Philadelphia Presbyterian*.

A BEAUTIFUL WORK.

It is the beautiful work of Christianity everywhere to adjust the burden of life to those who bear it, and them to it. It has a perfectly miraculous gift of healing. Without doing any violence to human nature, it sets it right with life, harmonizing it with all surrounding things, and restoring those who are jaded with the fatigue and dust of the world to a new grace of living. In the mere matter of altering the perspective of life and changing the proportions of things, its functions in lightening the care of man are altogether its own. The weight of a load depends upon the attraction of the earth. But suppose the attraction of the earth were removed. A ton on some other planet, where the attraction of gravity is less, does not weigh half a ton. Now Christianity removed the attraction of the earth, and this is one way in which it diminishes men's burdens. It makes them citizens of another world. What was a ton yesterday is not half a ton to-day. So without changing one's circumstances, merely by offering a wider horizon and a different standard, it alters the whole aspect of the world.—PROF. DRUMMOND, in *Pax Vobiscum*.

COLD OR HOT.

Cold or hot, my friend? Feel your spiritual pulse and see. Put the Bible thermometer under your tongue. Search your heart and find out how much love for Christ is left there. If, after such an honest examination, you find that the temperature has run low, very low—what then? Should you quit the church and throw up your Christian profession? No! a thousand times no! The Holy Spirit's message to you is, "Be zealous, therefore, and repent." The only way to repent of sin is to quit it. The only way to warm a chilled frame is not to throw yourself into a snow-bank, but hasten to the fire. Come back to a deserted Saviour! Instead of erasing your blurred name from the church registry, seek a reconversion.

Somon Peter's best work was done after he was reconverted. Do not stop with lamenting your neglect of the place of prayer. Open again the door of devotion and go in and throw yourself down at the Master's feet, and cry out, "I have sinned, I am no more worthy to be called thy servant." Set up again your altar, and on it lay the sacrifice of a contrite heart. At the earliest moment lay hold of some blood-stirring Christian work; it will warm you up. It may take some time to get the blood into full, free circulation again, and to recover your lost ground and lost tone of health. But when you do get a fresh tide of Christ's love pouring into your heart, and a fresh glow of His likeness on your countenance, you will feel as Lazarus must have felt when he shook off the grave-clothes and leaped into life again.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D.

We do not need to argue with men about Jesus. What man who has had a glimpse of Him needs to be argued with about Him?