

want to part, I know, for the Lord is with us, as we have felt; but remember that if we are His people,

Such ever bring Thee when they come,
And, going, take Thee to their home."

Slowly the people rose, and went out into the night, after warm hand-clasps which expressed more than many words. The rain had cleared away, and the stars which had been invisible at the commencement of the meeting were now burning with unusual brilliance; and as some of the people turned their faces back for a farewell look at the building in which they had assembled, the newly-risen moon just appeared above the ridge of the roof, and someone murmured to himself, "Arise, shine! for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

I have tried to describe this particular church meeting because, from what I hear, it is of a rather unusual type; but if any of my readers has heard of a church meeting more apostolic and more helpful, he will do a service to the churches in sending a report of it.—*The Independent, London, Eng.*

A GOOD WAY TO STUDY THE BIBLE.

One of the most profitable of exercises in which a student of the Bible can engage is to attempt making what is ordinarily called a "paraphrase" of that particular book of Scripture which at the time may be the subject of study. The endeavor to put into one's own language the biblical statement is sure to be attended with unexpectedly useful results. The outcome may be rude and ineffective, but the advantage to the worker is permanent. He gains a hold on the thought of the sacred writer, the relations of his ideas, the minute shades of meaning, as well as the great salient points, which prove most valuable. He has exercised independent thinking; he has been forced to work the writer's thought over after him—and that once done, and done in writing, makes that Book his own possession in a real and vital way. Such careful work, which is within the reach of every Bible student, requiring absolutely only the Scripture itself, is in many cases worth more to the average student than the superficial turning over, or the minute consultation, of innumerable commentaries. If theological students could be induced to go through the whole New Testament in this way, they would secure for their own use a commentary more valuable to them in many respects than all the rest of their library put together, and would have a grasp on biblical thought as a whole, which they would find exceedingly helpful in the later work of the ministry. No book repays patient labor so well as the Bible,

and no labor which requires patience—as this does—put forth on the Bible pays so well as the habit of re-writing the biblical material into one's own words.

The student who undertakes this task will find the benefit not only direct but indirect. The direct advantage has already been mentioned. The indirect advantages, if more general and possibly, in some cases, negative, are yet important.

(1) If he is an honest student his first feeling will be one of disappointment and regret in view of the difficulty of expressing in another form, or of working into a well-ordered statement, the verses and paragraphs to which he has devoted his study. He thought he knew what the writer was after; he had read the passage over many times; but now he finds it well nigh destitute of meaning and connection; he is puzzled by its difficulties of style, expression and thought, its repetitions, its inversions, its intricacies. He may be inclined to ask—"Why did not the writer, in a book intended to bear on personal life and religious truth, express himself more clearly, and without danger of misunderstanding, or likelihood of not being understood at all?" He may be tempted to the rash conclusion that he himself could have expressed the thought more clearly and strongly. Do not find fault with our student on this account. Do not accuse him of irreverence. He is at the point where he is about to learn the most effective lesson in Bible study that ever he received.

(2) He will not remain long in this first conclusion. A suspicion will begin to make itself felt that will crystalize in two propositions. (a) He himself has never really studied the Bible, and accordingly never knew what he thought he always had known. The mere attempt to put his own so-called knowledge into actual form, had demonstrated its emptiness. (b) He has no right to impose upon the biblical writer the tests of modern or occidental literary criticism. Even a biblical writer has the right to demand that he be judged by the literary standards of his own time. The student will learn to take up the writer's point of view, and recognize not only that no human language can perfectly represent divine thought, but also that an oriental writer even upon sacred themes, is still an oriental.

(3) A higher indirect result of the continuance of such a method of study will be the discovery of the wonderfully condensed style of many of the biblical writings. Many of their words contain books; their sentences, libraries. Pages fail to exhaust the various suggestions which a paragraph bears along with it. The concreteness of this style is also manifest. All is in touch with life. The simplicity combined with vividness characterizing the Gospel narratives compels admiration. They