

Steep Your Seed.

Beloved, there is one reason why we should pray, those of us who are engaged in the Lord's work in any way, because it "is prayer that will ensure success." Two labourers in God's harvest met each other once upon a time, and they sat down to compare notes. One was a man of sorrowful spirit, and the other joyous, for God had given him the desire of his heart.—The sad brother said, "Friend, I cannot understand how it is that everything you do is sure to prosper. You scatter seed with both your hands very diligently, and it springs up, and so rapidly too, that the reaper treads upon the heels of the sower, and the sower himself again upon the heels of the next reaper. I have sown," said he, "as you have done, and I think I can say I have been just as diligent; I think too the soil has been the same, for we have laboured side by side in the same town. I hope the seed has been of the same quality, for I have found mine where you get yours—the common granary. But alas, my seed, friend, mine never springs up. I sow it. It is as if I sowed upon the waves, I never see a harvest. Here and there a sickly blade of wheat I have discovered with great and diligent search, but I can see but little reward for all my labours." They talked long together, for the brother who was successful was one of a tender heart, and therefore he sought to comfort this mourning brother. They compared notes; they looked through all the rules of husbandry, and they could not solve the mystery, why one was successful and the other laboured in vain. At last one said to the other, "I must retire." "Wherefore?" said the other, "Why this is the time," said he, "when I must go and steep my seed."—"Steep your seed?" said the other. "Yes, my brother, I always steep my seed before I sow it. I steep it till it begins to swell, and germinate, and I can almost see a green blade springing from it, and then you know it speedily grows after it is sown." "Ah," said the other, "but I understand not what you mean. How do you steep your seed, and in what mysterious mixture?" "Brother," said he, "it is a composition made of one part of the tears of agony for the souls of men, and the

other part of the tears of a holy agony which wrestles with God in prayer:—this mixture if you drop your seed in it, hath a transcendent efficacy to make every grain full of life so that it is not lost." The other rose and went on his way, and forgot not what he had learned, but he began to steep his seed too; he spent less time in his study, more time in his closet; he was less abroad, more at home; less with man, and more with God. And he went abroad and scattered his seed, and he too, saw a harvest, and the Lord was glorified in them twain.—*Spurgeon.*

CHARACTER IS POWER.

It is often said that knowledge is power—and this is true. Skill or faculty of any kind carries with it superiority. So to a certain extent, wealth is power, and rank is power, and intellect is power, and genius has a transcendent gift of mastery over men. But higher, purer, and better than all, more constant in its influence, more lasting in its sway, is the power of character—that power which emanates from a pure and lofty mind. Take any community, who is the man of most influence? To whom do all look up with reverence? Not the "smartest" man, nor the cleverest politician, nor the most brilliant talker, but he who, in a long course of years, tried by the extremes of prosperity and adversity, has approved himself to the judgment of his neighbours and of all who have seen his life, as worthy to be called Wise and Good.—*Anon.*

PULL IT UP BY THE ROOT.

"Father, here is a dock," said Thomas, as he was at work with his father in the garden; "shall I cut it off close to the root?"

"No," replied his father, "that will not do; I have cut it up myself many times, but it grows again stronger and stronger. Pull it up by the root, for nothing else will kill it."

Thomas pulled again and again at the dock, but the root was very deep in the ground, and he could not stir it from its place; so he asked his father to come and help him, and his father went and soon pulled it out.