

REFINED SILVER.

By R. R. J. EMMERSON, SACKVILLE, N. S.



HE refiner sits by his melting pot,
With eye intent and with ready hand ;
From the molten silver his face turns not ;
Great drops of sweat on his forehead stand.

Tho' at sevenfold heat the furnace glows,
Ceaselessly still the fuel he plies ;
The strenuous fan knows no repose
But urges the flames as they leap and rise.

Anon o'er the dusky, shimmering disc,
Framed by the crucibles' ardent rim,
Shapeless shadows, frolic and whisk ;
Magical, mystical, images skim.

Surely now, the metal is purged !
Surely now, the fan may rest !
But to ardor more fervent the coals are urged,
And a closer gaze to the work addressed,

Till all the spectral visions fade
Like mists of night at the breath of morn ;
And clear from the depths of the flying shade,
The workman's reflected visage is born.

The work is finished ! That image attests
The metal worthy a master's skill ;
The eager flames cease their cleansing quests ;
The song of their travail at length is still.

And thou, who art pain-worn and weary of heart,
Learn the sweet lesson and joy in the fire,
That proves and explores each inward part,
And fits for what service the Lord may require.

The tear may start and the spirit faint ;
As in-breaking waters may be thy grief ;
Yet while there lingers one spot or taint,
Pray not the great Trier to give relief.

If He love thee much, He will leave thee not,
Till thy soul gives back to His loving eyes
His own bright image ; then happy thy lot,
A glad new strength in thy life shall arise.

A vessel of honor, of beauty, of use,
Meet for the Mightiest's high employ,
To thy seeking, no blessing his love shall refuse,
Rest will be weariness ; all labor, joy.

It is the fashion in some quarters to scoff at missionaries, to receive their reports with incredulity, to look at them at best as no more than harmless enthusiasts, proper subjects for pity, if not for ridicule. The records of missionary work in South Africa must be a blank page to those by whom such ideas are entertained. We owe it to our missionaries that the whole region has been opened up. Apart from their special service as preachers, they have done important work as pioneers of civilization, as geographers, as contributors to philological research. Of those that have taken part in this, Moffatt's name is not the best known. Moffatt, it may be said, has labored, and other men have entered into his labor. Livingstone has come after him, and has gone beyond him and has linked his memory forever with the records of the South African Church. The progress of South Africa has been mainly due to men of Moffatt's stamp. In him, as in David Livingstone, it is hard to say which character has predominated, that of the missionary proper or that of the teacher and guide. Certain it is that, apart from the special stimulus

they felt as proclaimers of the Gospel message, they would never have thrown themselves as they did into the work to which their lives were consecrated. It was by no zeal for the spread of civilization on its own account that they passed weary years laboring and teaching among savage tribes, amid dangers of every kind, amid privations of which they themselves made light, but which only a sense of their high spiritual mission could have prompted them to face and undergo.—*London Times.*

THERE are vast regions of the earth which once resounded with Allelujahs to Christ the King of Glory, that are now dumb to His praise. Of the Church in North Africa, which at one time counted nearly 200 dioceses, nothing remains. And why is this? Because, like Meroz, of old, it refused to go to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It made no effort, worthy of its position, that Christ might see of the travail of His soul amongst the surrounding heathen, and be glorified in their salvation. And so faith failed, and grace withered away from the Church in North Africa. And the records of its downfall exist to this day as a warning to ourselves. For God will not tolerate neutrality now-a-days, any more than in the days of old. As it was with the people of Meroz, the Church of Laodicea, and the Church of North Africa, so will it be with the Church of England, if she does not faithfully fulfil her office as a Missionary Church. And what is thus true of Churches is also true of individual members of the Church. There are none in a more perilous position than those who are Christian in name but not in spirit, who aid the Church in her missionary work neither by their prayers, their goodwill, nor their money. If we stand aloof, if from want of faith, dislike of trouble, love of ease, love of money, or from any other worldly or selfish motive, we do not help the missionaries, then we may look for nothing less than the curse which fell upon the faithless of old, a curse which will bring leanness to our souls, and hardness to our hearts, which will cleave to us here, and from which there will be no escape hereafter. It is not for us, the followers of the Crucified, the professors of a faith founded in self-sacrifice, to be selfish.

THE late Rev. Albert Barnes, who has left a very excellent, plain, practical commentary on the several books of the new Testament, says: "We have always thought that there are Christian minds and hearts that would find more edification in the forms of worship in the Episcopal Church than in any other. We have never doubted that many of the purest flames of devotion that rise from the earth, ascend from the altars of that Church and that many of the purest spirits that the earth contains minister at those altars, or breathe forth their prayers and praises in language consecrated to the use of piety for centuries."