

II. Possibly it may be thought that the work of the apostles after the bestowal of the Pentecostal gifts took a special departure in the direction, chiefly, of two of the three methods of work described in the Gospels—viz., those of preaching and teaching; leaving that of healing to occupy a very secondary and temporary position.

A special study, therefore, of the missionary work of the apostles, as recorded in the Acts and as illustrated in the Epistles, becomes of importance, whether as showing the continuity or otherwise of the indirect work of the Lord when He was "working with" the apostles, through His Spirit, with His direct work, while He "went in and out among" them in the flesh; whether as indicating the exactness or otherwise with which the apostles strove to imitate His example in the carrying out of that work.

In one respect the apostles had to commence and carry on their missionary work under conditions different from those obtaining in missionary effort of the present day: 1. They should be ready to carry the Gospel at once into all quarters and to various nations; 2. They should have power to force home its teaching on men's hearts and consciences and to defend its doctrine against the evil ingenuity of men's minds; 3. They should be able, in their practice, to recommend its message of mercy by deeds of mercy.

The apostles and their co-workers and immediate successors, therefore, were endowed with special "*gifts*" for these various ends; and for only so long as they were needed until (a) the Church was firmly planted in the various great centres of the world, and (b) placed under the immediate charge of native presbyters and deacons, in whose hands were written narratives of the life of our Lord and epistolary doctrinal instructions from His apostles.

The special gifts were: 1. Of "divers kinds of tongues" and of "interpretation (understanding) of tongues;" 2. Of "the word of wisdom" (prophecy) and of "the word of knowledge" (teaching); 3. Of "the working of miracles" and of "gifts of healing." None of these gifts are specially given now, because no longer necessary. The missionary of to-day has every means of instruction at his disposal. As to the first, he can obtain a full Bible in every principal language, with grammars and dictionaries and scholars to aid him; and, as to the second, he can study it in the light of its own completeness, and of the teaching of a long line of commentators. Thus, by God's help, he can go out fully equipped as a *preacher*. So, too, as to the third, he can learn to wield a power of healing which would have seemed to be an actual "working of miracles" to the people among whom the apostles moved—as it does seem still to be to the heathen of to-day—and can go out fully equipped as a *healer*. Special gifts are no longer necessary, not only because the Church is firmly established in the world, but also because its members have (so-called) natural means at their disposal, wholly unattainable in the days of the apostles. There is no record of the performance of miracles where "nat-