

pect to be when they disregard the counsel of the Lord. It is emphatically said, "*and that night they caught nothing*" (John xxi. 3.) To meet their present need, and as an evidence of the success which attends implicit obedience to his commands, he interposes. Provisions are supplied and cooked, when, after eating, Peter—as a representative of ministerial character and work—is thoroughly tested by Christ as to his qualification and intention, before confirming him in office and duties. He appealed to him as an Apostle and a man of business, by asking which he loved best—business or religion. "Lovest thou me more than these" ships, with their associations of profit and loss, storm and calm, the love of which has drawn thee away from my chosen work, "Lovest thou me more than these?" three times so emphatically put, until "Peter was grieved" to think that his sincerity should be suspected, decided at once and for ever by a solemn appeal to his omniscient Lord: "*Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee.*" Then, "feed my sheep" (John xxi. 15, &c.) was the crowning reply.

After this, the last lesson was given them to wait, and—"not many days hence"—the long-expected blessing should come (Acts i. 8.) With this, the whole church agreed to meet at Jerusalem to arrange matters, and prepare—by prayer and supplication—for the auspicious hour. Everything now appears to be ready for the Christian economy,—in the amplitude of its provisions, and the loftiness of its hopes,—to be brought in. The preparatory dispensations had waited their intended end. The eternal purpose of the Father—and we may reverently say of his incarnate Son—was to make the new dispensation one of inward spiritual life and power, by the sending down of the Holy Ghost. So glorious was it to be, that the Saviour spoke of it as far surpassing that of his bodily and visible presence with his people. Up to this time religion had chiefly consisted in carnal ordinances,—a sensible service. Christ had appeared in a sensible and tangible manner; but the Holy Ghost would not be visible, as his work would be in the heart,—influencing the will, the judgment, and the affections; the effects upon the character and habits of men being equally visible and convincing of its divinity, but far surpassing all former periods.

At length the day arrived,—that memorable first day of the week,—as they were assembled with one accord in one place, there came suddenly a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, filling all the house where they were sitting, and an unearthly flame—the symbol of the Divine presence and power—appeared among them, and assumed a tongue-like form, resting upon every one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak, in languages which they had never learned, to the assembled multitudes attending the great festival of the Pentecost, and in their various dialects the wonderful works of God. All the disciples of Christ were known to be unlearned men and women, but they all spake with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Its mighty effects are manifest in the greatness of the change of character presented. Peter, bold and daring, professed supreme love to Christ, draws his sword in his defence; but a few hours after, at the insinuation of a ser-