

1881



1893

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### "THIS IS THE VICTORY, EVEN OUR FAITH."

N.B.—Communications for this Department post-marked after the 18th of the month will appear in following month.

N.B.—All subscriptions for the OUTLOOK must be sent to the Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

N.B.—By request of Board of Managers, Auxiliary reports limited to fifteen lines.

### Our Monthly Reunion—Prayer Topic.

"For the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a necessary qualification for service."

THE Revised Version uses altogether the word "Spirit" in preference to the word "Ghost," in speaking of the Third Person of the Trinity.

The terms used in Scripture to illustrate the presence and power of the Holy Spirit are full of significance, and in their simplicity quickly adapt themselves to our comprehension.

The prophetic pen likens the Spirit to "rain," "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." How easily the mind grasps this idea. The dry earth, the thirsty foliage, and then the gentle, refreshing shower and its reviving influences filling the air with fragrance and cheer. So is the work of the Spirit on our hearts.

Then we read, "Come from the four winds O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." The gentle breathing of the life-giving air! We know its effect so readily, and thus we comprehend how the Spirit operates on the hearts and consciences slain by sin. This Holy Spirit is to be given in answer to prayer. Christ commissioned His apostles to "tarry" for His coming. And when they all with one accord waited in prayer, they felt that baptismal power which ushered in the dawn of that glorious redemption day in which we are privileged to live. The promises of God in prophecy are fulfilled in this day; the Holy Spirit has been poured out—the word "pour" suggesting the generous, unstinted measure. "Our sons and our daughters do prophesy," and shall through all time. The Holy Spirit is not the special gift to the sons of God's great family. Sons and daughters are to share alike in the glorious heritage.

Then the results of this "outpouring" are likened to the change effected in a wilderness. The wilderness is to become a "fruitful field," and the "desert blossom as the rose"—than which no simile could convey to us more of beauty or fragrance and delight.

The "fruits" of this presence of the Spirit in our personal character are "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," which, if we cultivate, will make us "like unto Him." The "gifts" of the Spirit, "the word of wisdom," "the word of knowledge," "faith," "prophecy," etc., as detailed in 1 Cor. xii. 8-11, are to fulfil the divine plan in their use. They are to be manifested for the glory of God in the uplifting of humanity. The great object of our Lord's coming is an object of life to us. We are co-workers for this object with Him. There is no room for hair-splitting theories and vague speculation; nor is there an option left to us if we have given ourselves to Him. The grand consummation of all this work is variously depicted in prophecy, and we are to labor diligently to hasten its approach.

The picture presented cannot fail to kindle the desire and enthusiasm of every lover of God and humanity. "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." "They shall see eye to eye," "they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "The work of righteousness shall be peace." "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of Thy times, and strength of salvation." There is no indication here that "might is to make right," nor that ignorance is to have a recognition. How can we call ourselves Christians and be indifferent to all the great reforms which have their germ thought in the good of humanity. M. Victor Cousin, in a lecture, says, "Thought makes history, and God directs thought." God the Holy Spirit, then, is the moving power in all such thought as tends to human progress. God's redeemed creatures are the instrumentality. How can we be guiltless if heedless or apathetic? In the blessings of Christ's kingdom as portrayed in Isaiah, emphasis is frequently laid on the work of the Spirit, and the predictions and promises are peculiarly appli-