

and the glutton ; and unless we are mistaken, it will be found that the most fastidious and dainty of all hearers of the gospel,—the people who are always complaining that “somehow or other, Mr. So and So's preaching doesn't do them any good,”—generally belong to this class of “good men that won't work.”

But another difficulty meets us almost everywhere,—the lack of the *gifts*, as so many allege, to enable them to engage in christian work. With most of them bashfulness is the obstacle ; they are “slow of speech.” Moses at first suffered from a similar cause, until the Lord rebuked him, and promised, “I will be with thy mouth, and teach ‘hee what thou shalt say.” Their diffidence, however is not so easily overcome. They are sure they could never interest a Sabbath school class, or lead a district prayer-meeting, or do any good by visiting the sick, or distributing tracts ; and as to speaking to any of their poor Christless neighbours, that, they think, requires a very special talent, such as only the saintly Felix Neff, and Harlan Page, and a few others have possessed. To pray in their own families is more than some of them can manage and how can we expect them to open their lips elsewhere ? True, they did good service in the last political campaign, and some of their neighbours say they really waxed eloquent in the praise of their favourite candidate, but that was a very different thing, of course.

Oh ! this mock humility with which our churches are plagued ! What a hindrance it is to every kind of effort ! Were we only to believe all the excuses that are offered, we must conclude that the servants of Christ are the most useless and good-for-nothing class in the community,—labourers that can't work, builders that can't build, soldiers that can't fight, husbandmen that know neither how to plant, nor to water, nor to reap. Is it so, then, that Satan lets go all the worthless and indolent, and retains for himself all the noble and the gifted ? Or are the rewards he offers so much greater than the crown of glory presented to the eye of the believer, that he can call forth the energies of his servants with a readiness which even the love of Jesus cannot command ? Surely not ! And yet, how strikingly does our backwardness in serving the best of masters contrast with the shameless effrontery which the slaves of Satan display, in advertising themselves, and their numberless devices for leading men to the pit !

Now all men are not born alike gifted, but neither are there any born into the kingdom of God without gifts. Indeed, as a general remark, we may say that aptitude is quite as much a thing of cultivation, as of direct endowment. There's many an one who thinks *he* has no talent for public speaking, who, had he “stirred up the gift that was in him,” by diligent study and prayer, would have made just as good a preacher as the minister to whom he listens every Sabbath, and perhaps better. And so we might say with regard to every other gift. “Unto him that hath shall more be given.”