

The Watchman.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN UPON THY WALLS OF JERUSALEM THAT SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE, DAY NOR NIGHT."

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Poetry.

SORROWS.

Woes are the guide-posts o'er the road of life,
The stars that dimly shine with feeble ray,
'Midst shoals of bitter sin and rocks of strife,
That humbly point to heaven the lovely way

Ingratitude, neglect, peccary, wrong,
That fall upon the head like mildew's blight,
Are but the Shepherd's hands, that lead along
Unto his gentle fold, where all is right.

Yes, all disease, with its delirious dream,
Is but the touching of the chastening rod.
Happy are we when such we can it deem,
For he who kindly wields it is our God.

It is the fire by which the ore is tried;
It is the lamp that lights us home to bliss;
The hand unto the silver cord applied—
And death the bursting of the chrysalis.

Miscellany.

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT.

We have already presented some view of the nature and effects of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of the Pentecost. The inquiry is an interesting and important one—How far were the scenes of this day peculiar to it, and how far was it the commencement of what is perpetuated in the churches? We have arrived at the conclusion that all that was essential to the fulfillment of the promise of the Father was perpetual, and, that, consequently in every important particular, we may expect such scenes in the Church in all ages. Preaching the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from above, and praying in the Holy Ghost, may be rare in our own times, but we have no reason to suppose that it was confined to the primitive ages. Nay, if we know anything of the promise of the Father, it is the fault of ministers and people that there is not more of the Holy Ghost among us.

It may be profitable to turn back and look at the attitude in which the primitive disciples awaited the promised Comforter. They did not come together with a mere transient purpose of producing an effect, and relapsing into coldness. They did not direct their view to the accomplishment of a certain effect, on the souls of impenitent men, of which they should be merely the triumphant witnesses. They did in the very outset, separate themselves from the world, in the single-hearted and unreserved devotion of their whole being to the Master they loved. In this state of separation, there was a deep consciousness of their need of the Spirit, and an earnest and insatiable thirsting for the Spirit. The instruction of Christ as well as their own experience led to this; and then there was a firm and unquestioning confidence in the promise of the Father, and the repeated assurances of their Master. These earnest desires, and this strong confidence, found a natural and practical expression in their persevering prayer, their entire unanimity, and their patient, waiting. It was probably, a proper and needful discipline to strengthen their faith to deepen their earnestness, to lead them to an entire submission to the divine sovereignty, and to prepare them for an entire surrender of soul to His influences, that the fulfillment was deferred from day to day. Whether this was primarily intended or not, there is no doubt that these effects were produced by the delay. The outpouring thus prepared for us, it is to be carefully noticed, upon the disciples, and its fruits are developed in their hearts and lives. It seems necessary to emphasize these particulars, because there is, it is to be feared, a widespread practical error, which is the occasion of much evil in the Church. Prayer for a revival of religion seems too often to be something very different from all this, and we cannot too earnestly urge that this matter should be looked into. With the same view, we direct attention to the subsequent internal fruits of the Spirit. It is true that amongst the foremost of these was the fervent and animated declaration of the wondrous things that God had wrought, and a mighty pleading of the claims of Christ; and earnest persuading men to be reconciled to God. And thus they became the channel through which the living waters flowed to a perishing world. God, blessing his own truth thus proclaimed, multitudes were converted. But the Spirit was not exhausted in this energetic and triumphant effort for the conversion of sinners. Its fruits were witnessed in the sequel as fully as in the immediate manifestation. The Comforter abode with them; and the glorious harvest of the Spirit's fruits,

love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, succeeded the public testimony to the truth, and redounded to the glory of God. There is nothing in which the churches are more urgently called upon to examine themselves, than their prayers for a revival. There is no way in which the Spirit can be more dishonored than in those prayers that seem, in reality, merely to endeavor to gain his presence to serve a purpose.

This may seem a hard expression, and yet, does not the machinery of many modern revivals justify it? We do not, for the present, enter on a more particular examination of them; but it will be felt, by those who have made extensive observations on the present state of the churches—that everything is arranged with reference to an immediate effect upon the world, and to increase the membership of the churches. Some one has remarked, "The great object is, to make conversion easy." Man becomes everything, and God's glory is lost sight of. Ministers lay their plans, and manage the proceedings, and then we find people extolling the exploits of their ministers, or the doings of their sect, in a manner that indicates but little of simple zeal for the glory of the name of Jesus.

On the other hand, how must the cause of Christ languish, and the Church go mourning without the light of the sun, until the people of God come up with one heart and one mind, and lay hold upon the promise, and coming with a holy boldness to him who has received and still holds, the dispensation of the Spirit, wrestle with him till the full tide shall overflow the barren and thirsty heritage, and cover it all over with the glory of a new verdure. It is not too much to believe—it is not too much to ask.—*Lean Pioneer.*

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Moses was called by the Lord the meekest man of the earth: (Numb. xii. 3.) Hence, he possessed the qualification to have more power with God in prayer, than any other man then living. After God had poured vial after vial of his wrath upon the haughty, tyrannical Pharaoh and his subjects, for refusing to release the Israelites from their cruel bondage, Pharaoh again and again called on Moses to pray for the removal of the plagues; in no instance did the meek Moses refuse, or his prayers fail of an answer. A man of the world, and many present church members, if in Moses's place, would have utterly refused to pray for such an oppressor; and would have said, "Now, you wicked wretch, you have got into trouble, get out the best way you can;" and if they did pray, it would be with so little of the meekness of Moses, and of faith, that their prayers would avail but little. When the fire of God's anger was consuming the rebellious Israelites, Moses prays and the fire ceases; (Numb. ii. 1-3.) On another occasion, nearly the whole camp of Israel rebelled against Moses, and were clamorous to have him stoned, and another appointed in his stead, to lead them back to Egypt. "Then it was that the meek, humble, God-like Moses appeared more like a bright angel of glory, than a mortal man," and exhibited much of the crowning characteristic of the Saviour; for he prayed most earnestly for his rebellious countrymen, notwithstanding the Lord had promised, that after the destruction of those rebels, he would make of him a greater and mightier nation than they; but still he pleads for God's glory and the life of the rebels; and the Lord hears and answers his prayer.—Numb. xiv. 1-25.

When the proud Assyrian monarch, Sennacherib, was marching with a mighty army to invade defenceless Judah, its pious king, Hezekiah, and the prophet Elisha, held a prayer meeting and cried to heaven for protection; (2 Chron. xxii. 20) and the Lord sent an angel that very night, and slew 185,000 men; and thus delivered the Jews from their impending danger. (2 Chron. xxii. 21-23; 2 Kings xix. 36-38.)

We have another striking instance of this power, in the case of Elisha. The king of Syria sent an army to take Elisha captive. A mighty host surrounded the city of Dothan where Elisha was then residing, and his servant was much alarmed; but, as the Psalmist said, "the righteous are as bold as a lion," Elisha says, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." "And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." 2 Kings vi. 12-17. What a striking illustration of the poet's remark, "The Christian is the highest style of man."

Angels of glory and his guards, and he has only to ask his heavenly Father, and he sends these angelic beings to his aid. Again Elisha prays the Lord to smite this hostile host with blindness, and it is done. And when the king of Israel inquired of Elisha if he should kill this invading army, then in his power, "No," said Elisha, "set bread and water before them."—He did so and thus helped coals of fire upon their heads, and melted their hearts from enmity to love, and ever after they were warm friends with Elisha and Israel, (2 Kings vi. 7-23.) We thus deduce from the above example the character of the man of God with a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

1. He is a man of strong, unwavering faith in God.

2. He was a man of prayer, and used the most brief and simple expressions, and the Lord granted his petitions.

3. He was a very bold man: a whole army failed to intimidate him.

4. He carried out the divine principles "love your enemies," "overcome evil with good."—Hence, his prayers truly had power in them.

Elijah's prayers had power to open and shut heaven, and to call down fire. Daniel's prayer draws an angel from heaven, and shuts the mouths of lions, so that he was safe among them.

Prayer unlocked the prison of Peter and set him at liberty. The day of Pentecost was preceded by a ten day's prayer meeting.—*Rev. C. Morley.*

ETERNITY.

"O eternity! eternity!" exclaimed an infidel, as he lay in despair upon his death-bed: "O eternity! eternity!" Who can paraphrase the words for ever and ever? I feel the difficulty. There is a meaning in them which our limited powers cannot fathom. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. As we stretch our minds to take in the boundless prospect, we sink back in conscious weakness, and feel that it is but a glimpse that we can get of the illimitable scene which lies before us, and which we designate by the term eternity. If we go to the dictionary, we find that term defined to be duration, without beginning or end.—In this view, we may be said to occupy a certain point in eternity. We look back upon a duration that never began, and forward to a duration that is never to end. God is the only Being of whom eternity, in this sense, can be predicated. He is without beginning of days or end of years—the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. He inhabits eternity; it is in his proper dwelling-place. *past* and *future* have no meaning in application to the duration of his being. But in respect to ourselves and our fellow men, eternity denotes an endless duration to come. We look back a few brief years and, reach the period when we were not. We came into being as it were but yesterday, and tomorrow we cease to be where we now are; we pass from this state of living men, and all that is visible of us is laid in the ground and turns to dust. And if this were the end of our being, eternity could have no meaning in relation to us. It could only be said of us, as of the beasts that perish, that we lived and moved a few days upon earth, and then passed into a state of non-existence.

But though the body die, and fall back to its original dust, the spirit lives, and lives for ever. In a few days we drop these tabernacles of clay—are born in a new world, entirely unlike that which we now inhabit; and our immortal spirits, emancipated from the thralldom of earth and sense, enter upon a state not only of endless being, but of endless advancement in all the capacities of thought, of feeling, of enjoyment, and suffering. Who can estimate the value of the soul possessing such a nature and with such prospects before it? And what significance does this view impart to the question propounded by our Saviour: "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his soul? or what shall he give in exchange for his soul?"

PREPARATION FOR THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

The path up to the judgment-seat is not a way of preparation, nor at His bar is it a place to prepare for eternity. It is no time to prepare for battle when the enemy is in the camp; and no time to meet a foe when he has broken open your door. There is such a thing as putting off preparation until it is too late. A man may neglect the care of his health until it is too late. A student may suffer the proper time to prepare for a profession to glide away until it is too late. A farmer may neglect to plough and sow until

it is too late. A man on a rapid stream near a cataract may neglect to make efforts to reach the shore until it is too late. And so in religion. It is easy to put it off from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, until it shall be too late—Beyond that interview with God there is no preparation. Your eternity is not to be made up of a series of successive probation, where though you fall in one, you may avail yourself of another. There is but one probation—O how short! how fleeting! how soon gone! The shuttle of the weaver flies not swifter; nor do the shadows move more rapidly over the plain. Each day leaves the number less—and not one of them can be recalled. Life is passed through not to be travelled over again; and each foot-print is made to be seen by us no more. He that comes after us may track our way nearer and nearer to the beach where the ocean of eternity rolls; he may see step after step in the sand, till he comes to the last print, half washed away by the tide, where we plunged into the vast ocean and disappeared for ever. You go not back again. This day, this hour, you live but once; and thus setting sun will have taken one irrevocably from the allotted days of your probation. I wonder at a man. The earth is our place of probation—and it is all—literally, absolutely, all. In that probation, if ever, you and I are to be prepared for that vast eternity on which we enter in a few days. If not prepared then, we never are to be prepared. Point me, fellow-mortal, to the slightest proof whatever, or to the slightest presumption—I will not ask for proof—that another season of probation is to be granted to you beyond the judgment of the great day, and I will never urge this point again. But if there is none, my dying fellow-man, you ought to be prepared to meet God. It is not a thing of privilege, it is a thing of obligation. Your conscience, your reason, your sober judgment, all respond to the claim which I urge upon you, that you should be ready to meet God. You who have adopted it as a settled purpose that you will not enter a profession without being prepared for it; you who will not appear in the gay assembly without hours spent under skillful hands at the toilet, that you may be prepared to it, ought you to be prepared to appear before God. You ought to have on a brighter than any earthly array; you ought to have on the garments of salvation—the pure and spotless robes wrought by the Redeemer's hands and dyed in his blood." Not as you are now, sinful, unforgiven, gay, worldly, thoughtless, ambitious, should you stand before the great and pure Jehovah to receive the sentence which will seal your eternal doom.

BACKBITING.

Do not speak evil of your neighbor unless in a case of urgent necessity. A godly man has asked, "Lord, who shall abide in the tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" The Holy Ghost has answered, "He that walked uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." This backbiting, it seems, and talking up reproaches against our neighbors, may prove an ill kind of work—it may even help to shut one out of the kingdom of heaven. And then, what is gained by it?—Am I the richer for saying that my neighbor is poor? It may be true; but is the publication required? Will it add to my beauty to say that he is homely; or to my wisdom to say that he is foolish? If he is poor, it will soon enough be known; if not comely in his person, God has made him as well as me, and I ought not without good reason to criticise my Maker's work: if he is foolish, it may be that he belongs to a large company, and ought not to be singled out as deserving special reproach.

So much have I said concerning our neighbors in general. But some of these are brethren in the church of Christ, some are ministers of the gospel. Can it be right to speak evil of them, where neither love nor justice requires it?—to take up reproaches against them merely because it can be done? think my brother, before thou speakest injurious or contemptuously, whether it is best, whether it is likely to do the most good. A man's good name is his title to the highest offices; spoil him of that, and you may deprive the world of a benefactor. Many a man, and, it may be, high in the church, has less power to do good to-day because some one spoke ill of him yesterday.