

THE DIVINE TEACHER.

In the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel the Saviour says: "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." And again, in the same chapter, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Here you see the office of the Spirit of God is to instruct mankind in regard to the things of religion.

Now, it is manifest that none but the Spirit of God can supply this defect, from a single consideration—that all teaching by words, whether by Jesus Christ, or by apostles, or by any inspired or uninspired teacher coming merely through the senses, can never put the mind in possession of the idea of spiritual things. The kind of teaching that we need is this: we want some one to teach us the things of religion, who is not obliged to depend on words, or to reach our mind through the medium of the senses. We want some way in which the ideas themselves can be brought to our minds, and not merely the signs of the ideas. We want a teacher who can directly approach the mind itself, and not through the senses, and who can exhibit the ideas of religion, without being obliged to use words. This the Spirit of God can do.

The manner in which the Spirit of God does this, is what we can never know in this world. But the fact is undeniable, that He can reach the mind without the use of words, and can put our minds in possession of the ideas themselves, of which the types, or figures, or words, of the human teacher, are only the signs or imperfect representatives. The human teacher can only use words to our senses, and finds it impossible to possess us of the ideas of that which we have never experienced. But the Spirit of God, having direct access to the mind, can, through the outward sign, possess us of the actual idea of things. What Christian does not know this, as a matter of fact? What Christian does not know from his own experience, that the Spirit of God does lead him instantly to see that in a passage of Scripture, which all his study and effort of mind to know the meaning of could never have given him in the world?

Take the case again, of the painting on the wall there, and suppose that all the congregation were blind, and I was trying to describe to them this painting. Now, suppose, while I was laboring to make them understand the various distinctions and combination of colors, and they are bending their minds to understand it, all at once their eyes are opened! You can then see for yourselves the very thing which I was vainly trying to bring to your minds by words. Now, the office of the Spirit of God, and what He alone can do, is to open the spiritual eye, and bring the thing which we try to describe by analogy and signs, in all their living reality before the mind, so as to put the mind in complete possession of the thing as it is. It is evident, too, that no one but the Spirit of God so knows the things of God as to be able to give us the idea of those things correctly. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man that is in him?" What can a beast know of the things of a man, of a man's character, designs, etc.? I can speak to your consciousness—being a man, and knowing the things of a man. But I cannot speak these things to the consciousness of the beast; neither can a beast speak of these things, because he has not the spirit of a man in him, and cannot know them. In like manner, the Bible says, "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The Spirit of God, knowing from consciousness the things of God, possesses a different kind of knowledge of these things from what other beings can possess; and, therefore, can give us the kind of instruction we need, and such as no other being can give.—*Rev. Chas. G. Finney.*

THE test by which we can estimate a man's progress in spiritual life is the extent to which he measures the visible by the laws of the unseen. He who is in the highest sense spiritual, feels the world to be a divine temple, because he realizes God in it.—His infinite presence shining from the deep sky above, and His love revealed in every flower. To him Christ is everywhere, hallowing, as of old, the relationships of life, and coloring by His sympathy its struggles and its sorrows. He can reverence men, not because they are rich, or successful, or powerful, but because they are living and immortal spirits; and his standard of life is not the expedient, or the pleasurable, or the popular—but the righteousness, the truth, the love of the Eternal world.—*The late Rev. E. L. Hull.*