

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

THE PRAYER FOR LABOURERS.

"Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust forth labourers into His harvest."

How long shall it take us to learn that the grand inspiration to all missions the world over, and to all missionary spirit and sacrifice in the Church, is prayer, not appeal to men, but appeal to God?

This is but one of those injunctions and promises which fix our eyes upon prayer as the great motor in the kingdom of God. Again we affirm it; Prayer has turned every great crisis in the kingdom. It can bring men, it can furnish money, it can supply all the means and *materiel* of war. Yet, we sadly but seriously affirm that this, the grandest of all the springs of missionary activity, is that on which the least practical dependence is placed in our missionary machinery.

Let us look at the bearing of believing supplication upon our supply of labourers for the harvest field.

The fascination about all true Christian work is that, first of all, it is God's work. The true child of God longs to find his place and sphere in that grander sphere of divine activity where he is permitted to share co-operation with God. Now all true adaptation to our work depends on a higher plan than ours. God's work reaches through the ages and spans even the eternities. Every workman must have his fitness for his particular work, and that fitness must be of God, for the workman cannot know what particular demands that work will make upon him until he gets at work, and then it is too late to prepare. Preparation must be carried on earlier, and, because no man can tell with certainty what he is to be called to do, or where he is to be placed, the only hope and faith that can solve the perplexity must fasten on the Providence of God. He who foresees and foreknows what the work is to be must predestine and prepare the worker to do it.

Does He not? Who that studies history—which is the mere record of God's dealings with humanity—cannot see that a divine plan is at work? that in the great crisis of affairs He brings forth some man or woman singularly prepared, unconsciously prepared, often unwillingly prepared, for the work and the sphere, so that, as in the building of the temple, no sound of axe, hammer or tool of iron was heard while it was in building—so again there is no need of any adaptation after the man and his work meet—they mutually fit as stone does stone, or timber does timber, where the work has been properly done in the quarry or in the shops.

Many a man has no chance or need to adapt himself to his "environment." One of the great objections to "evolution" is found in the frequent examples of preadaptation with which nature abounds. A caterpillar that lives on the earth, crawls on its own belly, eats leaves and refuse,—at a certain stage of its history enters the chrysalis state. It is to emerge from its cocoon a winged butterfly, henceforth to soar, not creep or crawl, to sip the honey from the dainty nectaries of flowers. Here is a wholly new experience of which the life of the worm furnished no earnest. Now, if you run a sharp blade down the length of the cocoon, and cut through the cuticle of the animal while yet in the chrysalis state, you will find all the peculiar organs of the future butterfly or moth mysteriously enfolded beneath that skin. How are they to be accounted for? That caterpillar no more know its future state and needs than the unborn infant knew its coming wants. It could not be said to adapt its organs to its new life after its emergence from the cocoon, for those organs were all there long before the moment of that new birth. And so the reverent Christian scientist accounts for the preadaptation by a higher evolution in the plan of a Creator.

Just so we discern in history preadaptations that defy any explanation without faith in the providence of God. Men themselves have been undergoing a peculiar training for ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, which has found its explanation only when God has brought them and their pre-ordained work together! Moses, in the palace and court of Pharaoh, from the hour when he was taken out of the basket of bulrushes, was unconsciously preparing to become God's great agent in Israel's deliverance and organization; the fitness of that man as leader and law-giver, poet and prophet, organizer and administrator, is so exact and marvellous that it compels belief in God. Luther at Erfurt and Wurtemberg, Knox in Scotland, Calvin in Switzerland, John Wesley and Charles Wesley in England, Jonathan Edwards in New England, William Carey at Hackleton, A. Joniram Judson in Williams-town, John Hunt at Hykeham Moor, John E. Clough studying civil engineering, David Livingstone poring over Dick's "Siderial Heavens," Henry M. Stanley reporting for the New York Herald—these are examples of men whom God was unconsciously making ready for a special work of which they had no conception, and for which they could make no intelligent preparation.

Who was it that not only raised up those six remarkable men and missionaries—Schwartz, Carey, Judson, Morrison, Wilson and Duff—but raised them up in the same age and epoch of missions? All of them from humble life, but of varied nationalities, of different denominations—Lutheran, Baptist, Independent, Presbyterian; who was it gave to all of them essentially the tastes and the training of scholars, though their early surroundings in several cases specially forbade; who was it that singularly fitted them to be theologians, translators,

philologists, scientists and teachers? Who was it that so singularly adjusted the plan of these several lives that each spent some forty years among the natives of India, Burmah or China; passed the advanced limit of three-score years and ten, and died rejoicing not only in their labours but in the fruit of their labours?

Sometimes, indeed, it suddenly appears to the man himself that the adaptation somehow exists; but it is only the consciousness of a pre-fitness. John Hunt has been compared to the forest bird, which, hatched in the nest of some common domestic fowl, moves about restless among the pullets and ducks in the barnyard, until some day, finding its pinions grown long and strong, and instinctively conscious that the air, not the earth or the water, is its native element, suddenly soars from the ground and makes straight and swift flight toward the freedom of the woods and the higher realms of the atmosphere! Of how many of God's workmen might similar words be written? And what new hope does it impart to missions as the enterprise of the Church to know that while God buries the workman He carries on the work! No gap ever occurs that He cannot fill. How often a despondent spirit cries, when such a man falls as John Williams of Erromanga, or Mackay of Uganda, or Livingstone at Lake Bangweolo, or Keith Falconer at Aden, "How shall that man's place be filled?" But God has another man ready, and sometimes two to take the place of one. And so the work goes on.

The subject will bear indefinite expansion; but our object is only to sound once again the grand key note of all missions—believing prayer. The field is wide—world-wide. The harvest is great but the labourers are few. How are they to be supplied? There is but one way authorized in Scripture: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest." Nothing else can fill these vacant fields with an adequate supply of workmen. Education cannot do it. A great deal of our education is leading young men and women away from mission fields. "The spectacles of the intellect," says Dr. David Brown, "are binocular." There is a tendency in all intellectual culture, as in the gathering of earthly riches, to make us practically Godless. Men become purse-proud by accumulating wealth, and brain-proud by accumulating learning. If God does not hear prayer and give learning and culture a divine direction, a heavenly anointing, our colleges will only raise up a generation of sceptics. Our appeals and arguments will not give the Church missionaries; unless the demonstration of the spirit is added to the demonstration of logic, no conviction will result that leads to consecration—that higher logic of life.

And when workmen are on the field, it is the same prayer that must secure to the word they preach "free course," so that it is glorified. When the Church at Antioch, praying and fasting, sent forth Barnabas and Saul on that first missionary tour, the Church kept praying; and, in answer to prayer, doors, great and effectual, opened before them, and repentance unto life was granted unto the Gentiles, and mighty signs and wonders were wrought by the hands of those primitive pioneer missionaries.

We have heard many things said in depreciation of J. Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission. We have heard his whole work stigmatized as "without a foundation," a "wild scheme," "impracticable," "lacking all elements of stability and permanence;" we have heard said of it, that it "gets men and women into Inland China, and then leaves them there to starve," etc. One thing is very remarkable about it: it sets us, all an example of faith in God and power in prayer. It has been the writer's privilege to meet frequently and in circumstances favourable for confidential intercourse, this beloved man of God—this "Paul, the little"—and from his own lips to hear the history of the China Inland Mission. It is a wonderful story; it sounds like new chapters in the Acts of the Apostles. Mr. Taylor was at the little Conference of Believers at Niagara-on-the-Lake in July, 1888 and 1889. At the first, he made a precious address, fragrant with the anointing of God unpretentious, modest, simple, childlike. It took us all captive by a divine fascination. He simply unfolded the Word of God, made no appeal, would, in fact, have no "collection." But that little company of believers, mostly poor, constrained him to accept a free-will offering of some \$2,500. To our surprise he was rather anxious than pleased. And in 1889 he told us the source of his perplexity. As nearly as we can recall, these were his words:—

"When that money was put into my hands, I felt burdened, when the Lord sends me workers I feel no anxiety, for I know that He who provides labourers for His harvest-field will provide the means to put them into the field. But when the Lord gives me money and not the workmen to use the money, I know not what to do with it. When from the Conference of 1888 thirteen volunteers subsequently offered themselves for the great field of China, I said, 'Now the Lord has solved my perplexity.' But, you see, we sometimes reckon too fast. And so it was with me. For when I went to the places from which these beloved labourers were to go forth to the harvest-field the churches to which they belonged insisted on paying all the expenses of their outfit and journey; and so I had this money still on hand, and my perplexity was increased. Now, dear friends, don't give me any more money unless you give me the men and women to use it!"—Dr. A. T. Pierson in *Missionary Review*.

which geology has found for the latter part, it may happen that we shall owe a debt of the same kind to astronomy as we now owe to geologic science. My present purpose is to call particular attention to the exact nature and extraordinary amount of that debt. There was nothing necessarily unreasonable in accepting as worthy of belief this portion of the Book of Genesis, along with the rest of the book, and with other books of Holy Scripture, on general proofs of their inspiration, if sufficient, apart from any independent buttress, either of science or of history, to the creation story. In a court of justice, the evidence of a witness is to be accepted on matters within his cognizance, when his character and intelligence are not questioned; or again, when the main part of a continuous narrative is sufficiently verified, it may be right to accept the rest without separate verification. If a new witness comes into court, and pretends to give us fresh and scientific proof of the creation story, this may be true or may be false. If false, the story is not disproved, but stands where it stood before. Bad arguments are often made for a good cause. But, if true, the event is one of vast importance. Now, the present position is as follows: Apart altogether from faith, and from the general evidences of revelation, a new witness has come into court, in the shape of natural science. She builds up her system on the observation of facts, and upon inferences from them, which at length attain to a completeness and security such as, if not presenting us with a demonstration in the strictest sense, yet constrain us as intelligent beings, to belief. The creation story divides itself into the cosmological portion, occupying the first nineteen verses of the chapter, and the geological portion, which is given in the last twelve. The former part has less, and the latter part has more, to do with the direct evidence of fact, and the stringency of the authority which the two may severally claim varies accordingly; but in both the narrative seems to demand, upon the evidence as it stands, rational assent. In regard to both, it is held on the affirmative side that the statements of Genesis have a certain relation to the ascertained facts and the best accepted reasonings; and thus this relation is of such a nature as to require us, in the character of rational investigators, to acknowledge in the written record the presence of elements which must be referred to a superhuman origin. If this be so, then be it observed that natural science is now rendering a new and enormous service to the great cause of belief in the unseen, and is underpinning, so to speak, the structure of that divine revelation which was contained in the Book of Genesis by a new and solid pillar, built up on a foundation of its own from beneath. It is, then, to be borne in mind, that, as against those who, by arbitrary or irrational interpretation, place Genesis and science at essential variance, our position is not one merely defensive. We are not mere reconcilers, as some call us, searching out expedients to escape a difficulty, to repel an assault. We seek to show and we may claim to have shown, that the account recorded, in the creation story for the instruction of all ages has been framed on the principles which, for such an account, reason recommends; and that, interpreted in this view, it is at this juncture like the arrival of a new auxiliary army in the field while the battle is in progress.—William E. Gladstone, in *Sunday School Times*.

WOMAN'S INTUITION.

An old gentleman over seventy came into the city from his farm, without his overcoat. The day turned chilly and he was obliged to forego his visit to the fair.

To a friend who remonstrated with him for going away from home thus unprepared, he said: "I thought it was going to be warm; my wife told me to take my overcoat, but I wouldn't. Women have more sense than men anyway."

A frank admission.

Women's good sense is said to come from intuition: may it not be that they are more close observers of little things? One thing is certain, they are apt to strike the nail on the head, in all the ordinary problems of life, more frequently than the lords of creation.

According to Dr. Alice Bennett, who recently read a paper on Bright's disease before the Pennsylvania State Medical Society, persons subject to bilious attacks and sick headaches, who have crawling sensations, like the flowing of water in the head, who are 'tired all the time' and have unexplained attacks of sudden weakness, may well be suspected of dangerous tendencies in the direction of Bright's disease.

The veteran newspaper correspondent, Joe Howard, of the New York Press, in noting the statement, suggests "Possibly Alice is correct in her diagnosis, but why doesn't she give some idea of treatment? I know a man who has been 'tired all the time' for ten years. Night before last he took two doses of calomel and yesterday he wished he hadn't."

A proper answer is found in the following letter of Mrs. Davis, wife of the Rev. William J. Davis, of Basil, O., June 21, 1890.

"I do not hesitate to say that I owe my life to Warner's Safe Cure. I had a constant hemorrhage from my kidneys for more than five months. The physicians could do nothing for me. My husband spent hundreds of dollars, and I was not relieved. I was under the care of the most eminent medical men in the state. The hemorrhage ceased before I had taken one bottle of the Safe Cure. I can safely and do cheerfully recommend it to all who are sufferers of kidney troubles."

If he who makes two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before be a public benefactor, equally so is he who plants a tree that may one day take its place among the "green-robed senators of mighty woods."