

in rebuke, as fearless as an angel, standing as a preacher upon the summits of power, was prepared for his great ministry by lonely sorrow. Who can tell what throes of heart he knew, a sad orphan student in the wilderness, as he waited for the day of his appearing to Israel! Having suffered as he contemplated the sins of his time, and the far lapse of his people, he was competent to preach in the spirit of Elijah.

Each of the two great examples cited knew solitude as well as sorrow. The value of solitude was appreciated once; it is forgotten now. Once meditation was known to be as necessary to strength of soul as sleep to strength of body; now men hurry and bustle, and look here and there to see new conditions and learn novel methods, and think that they will be powerful in proportion as they are "practical;" and what use have they for meditation? What virtue is there in mysticism? they ask, as they stop, breathless, for a moment. There is room for an argument to the effect that there was never yet a full-orbed Christian life from which mysticism was absent; but this is neither here nor there, for meditation and mysticism are not necessarily linked together. Meditation upon God and his works; upon man and his destiny; upon this age and its perils; upon life and its obligations—is absolutely essential to a proper understanding of the opportunities which are at hand. Unless we meditate we are like gunners who do not spend time to locate the target: like pilots who, regardless of a specific port to be sought, think it sufficient if they are steering through water. By meditating we become more fully possessed of truth; come into more full accord with the spirit of service; grow quiet and steadied, and know better what path to take as we go our way for speech or action. The late A. J. Gordon pleaded with his brethren to live a part of their life alone with God. Phelps' "Still Hour" shows how solitude may enrich the soul. Thousands have read such books as "The Imitation of Christ" until a new light was in their eye and a new power in their message.

If those who preach would reach the heights of power which are accessible to them, they must understand that preaching is no child's task. Among men no sublimer task is known. There is mighty power in good preaching—in preaching which has in it thought, and force, and fire, a divine fury in rebuke, a divine