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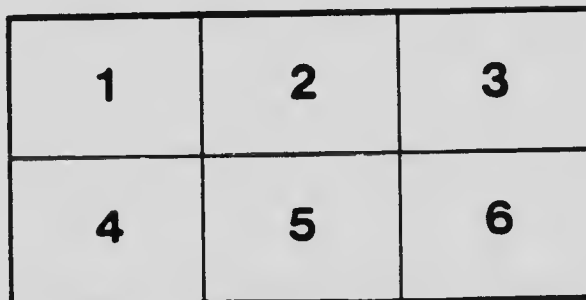
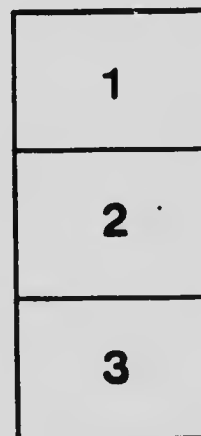
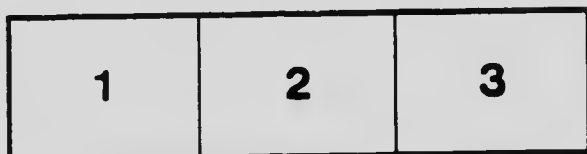
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'The Meeting'

(OLD STYLE)

BY

J. HIXON IRVING.



L.
3477
44

W
P58467.R84 M4

Divine Order.



PRAYER

"I will PRAY with the spirit, and I will PRAY with the understanding also."

SONG

"I will SING with the spirit, and I will SING with the understanding also."

THANKSGIVING

"Else when thou shalt BLESS with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say (the) AMEN at thy GIVING of THANKS, seeing he understandest not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest THANKS well, but the other is not edified."

TEACHING

"I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church (in assembly) I had rather speak five words with my understanding that. . . . I might TEACH others also, than ten thousand words in a (unknown) tongue."

EDIFYING

"Let all things be done unto EDIFYING."

ORDER

"Let all things be done decently and in ORDER."

I. Cor. XIV: 15-19, 26, 40.

u

The Day of Bays.

I.

The day dawned fair o'er a wide vale,
Through which a drowsy river flows,
And saw o'erspread with dew'y veil,
The fragrant green and white hedge rows,
Which guarded like protecting shields
The rural wealth within the fields.

II.

Upon an ancient forest near,
With its fleet-footed denizens,
The mottled roe and fallow deer—
The sun threw orient benisons
Deep bathing the fair scene in light,
As ushering in the first day bright.

III.

The slades and glades of woodland green,
Which sheltered once the Gipsy tribe,
Were clad in gorgeous summer sheen,
No art of man could well describe
While trem'ulous nightingale and thrush,
Poured melody from every bush.

THE MEETING

IV.

Upon a red-roofed forest town,
Fell showers of light and solar heat,
Causing the lanes of gravel brown
To glow beneath the passer's feet,
Constraining thus the forest folks
To move in shade beneath the oaks.

V.

Argent chimes from many a steeple,
Rang out upon the vibrant air,
Calling out the forest people,
To the time-hoar fanes of prayer,
While some for whom no bell was toll'd
To one appointed center stroll'd.

VI.

Well-wedded dawn to such a day,
When lives are freed from wearying toils,
And cares like vapours pass away,
Unwinding their constricting coils,
And mind is brought into accord,
Both with the day and with its Lord.

THE MEETING

The Meeting.

VII.

In yonder meeting-house of pine,
Brought from a Northern misty land,
Constructed in a quaint design,
By some craftsman's dexterous hand,
There did kindred spirits gather,
To worship Him they knew as Father.

VIII.

'Twas there a pious company met,
Not in the name of land or race,
By no restricting rules beset,
But free the whole Church to embrace,
And thus in unfeigned love receive
All who upon the Lord believe.

IX.

They confessed the Christ as Head
Of His own Church wide-spread o'er earth,
No man could they accept instead,
No matter what his rank or birth,
They fully owned His love and care,
For all His people everywhere.

THE MEETING

X

No pretentious claims they made,
To be "the Church of God" on earth,
Nor on official board displayed,
High sounding terms provoking mirth,
Nor giving to themselves such airs,
As would to pious souls be snares.

XI.

Plain seats around a square were placed,
While in the center stood a board
Which with bread and wine were graced
The twin-memorials of the Lord,
Of His blest body and His blood,
And emblems both of spiritual food.

XII.

Around the four sides of the square,
The elders sat of pious mien,
Each head was crowned with frosted hair,
"Where once a different shade had been,"
Also upon its manly face,
Deep set were seals of saving grace.

THE MEETING

XIII.

No mimic "priest" in garish dress,
Nor "minister" with pompous air,
Nor "ruling-elder" to repress,
The Holy Spirit's working there,
Or to de-throne the present Lord,
Who to His own fulfills His word.

XIV.

Some young were there as well as old,
Some rich were seated with the poor,
Like to a flock within a fold,
Or more like sons within the door,
In one united company,
Truth gathered in simplicity.

XV.

What can on earth with this compare?
Where could there be more beauty seen?
There's nought to opened eyes more fair,
To those who have the vision keen,
Or more attractive to the heart!
Of one who has in Christ a part.

THE MEETING

XVI.

Simplicity was stamped on all,
Within, without it was the same,
The worshippers had heard the call
Of Him who bears the worthy name—
“O my redeemed come unto me
And in my truth ye shall be free.”

THE MEETING

Silence.

XVII.

There waited all in scilence sweet,
Gathering in each wandering thought,
That they might give God worship meet,
Such as by the One Spirit wrought,
Within a consecrated heart,
Unfettered by religious art.

XVIII.

They in the fear of God had met,
All yielded to His holy will,
Hence the calm waiting did not fret,
Nor one spiritual longing chill,
'Twas a silence marked by power,
Because the Holy Spirit's dower.

XIX.

Power, often known in scenes like this
Which falls upon the heart like dew
From Him who ever loves to bless
His own: the many, or the few,
Power which does their strength restore
As in heart stillness they adore.

THE MEETING

Prayer.

XX.

An elder rose and led in prayer,
Before the throne within the veil,
And soon the waiters were drawn where,
Devoted hearts with God prevail,
When all who had the heavenly mind,
Left the dead things of earth behind.

XXI.

His thoughts were choicest of their kind,
His language reverent and meet
As with true heart and chastened mind,
He laid devotions at the feet
Of God, who draws His loved ones near
To worship Him in holy fear.

XXII.

'Tis only those who always pray,
Can lead the people up to God,
'Tis only such as day by day,
In secret feed upon His word,
Can raise the hearts of His saints where,
They time forget with all its care.

THE MEETING

XXIII.

Dry indeed are ancient creeds,
Doubly dead are printed prayers,
For how could such express the needs
Of a heart bowed down with cares?
Such things may suit religious drones
Who hum their prayers in "holy tones."



THE MEETING

Song.

XXIV.

A reverent pause and then a song,
In which each present took a part,
By no gowned choir led along,
Nor keys formed by mechanics art,
But each one did the voice up raise,
In harmonious heartfelt praise.

XXV.

The singers in the spirit sang,
And with the understanding too,
Until the meeting-house it rang,
As hallowed praises echoed through,
While the joint worshippers bestowed
Heart gifts on Him whom they did laud.

XXVI.

Oh, the rich legacy of song
The Church inherits from the past
Time's rolling waves have borne along
And at our very feet have cast
So that each undertone of thought
May in the choicest mould be wrought.

THE MEETING

The Lord's Supper,

XXVII.

Thus in silence, prayer and song
Bound round with worship's golden cord,
Swiftly the moments sped along
Unto the Supper of the Lord,
An elder at the table led
The meeting folks in thanks for bread.

XXVIII.

Not for the bread alone did he,
Lift up the heart in thanks to God,
His praise was pitched in higher key,
For Him who underwent the rod,
In judgment borne vicariously,
In darkness on the hideous tree.

XXIX.

Scarcely a single word was said
Because each one was well employed
As from hand to hand the bread
Adown the waiting rows deployed
That each one might have a token
Of the Lord's own body broken.

THE MEETING

XXX.

A second time that elder stood
At the plain memorial board,
A second time gave thanks to God,
Now for the shed blood of the Lord,
Ere he sent round the sacred cup
That everyone of it might sup.

XXXI.

Eucharistic each uttered word,
Eucharistic each expressed thought,
Praise by the Spirit of the Lord,
Within a human spirit wrought,
So that those of spiritual ken,
Could well attach the seal—"Amen."

XXXII.

A hallowed tenderness was there
Among the children of the Lord,
As thus they did His death declare
With chastened hearts in close accord,
In joy they sang this holy hymn
While many eyes with tears were dim:

THE MEETING

"No gospel like this feast,
Spread 'or Thy saints by Thee,
Nor prophets, nor evangelists,
Preach the glad news more free.

All our redemption cost,
All Thy redemption won,
All it has won for us the lost,
All it cost Thee the Son.

Thine was the bitter price,
Ours the free gift given,
Thine was the blood of sacrifice,
Ours is the wine of heaven.

Here we would rest midway,
As on a sacred height;
The darkest and the brightest day
Meeting before our sight.

From that dark depth of woes,
Thy love for us has trod,
We soar to heights of blest repose,
Thy love prepares with God.

Thus from self's chains released,
One sight alone we see—
Still at the Cross, while at this feast,
We see Thee only Thee.*

*By C. Rundle-Charles. "Hymns of Light and Love,"
No. 119.

THE MEETING

XXXIII.

When the last chord had died away,
A tender silence fell on all,
They'd climbed a spiritual height that day,
Where things of earth had lost their thrall;
It seemed as if they'd run their race,
And with their Lord were face to face.

XXIV.

They who own the Christ as Lord,
Those who are yielded to His will,
Such with His mind have true concord,
Upon them He displays His skill,
Much like the clay on potters' wheels,
In truth the potter's mind reveals.

XXXV.

Can room for self-will there be found?
A place for democratic pride?
No! for thrice holy is the ground
Where the Lord himself doth guide,
In the ordering of the feast
There He is most and man the least

THE MEETING

XXXVI.

The novice has no standing there,
No carnal mind should dare intrude,
Nor one whose life will not compare,
With claims divine set out in Word,
No slip shod speech be there allowed
Nor vulgar ranting of the crowd.



THE MEETING

Giving.

XXXVII.

Worship may not be always oral,
It often may be silent too,
Glad giving may be worship's choral,
If the fixed purpose be to do
The will of Him; life source of all
Who truly on His name do call.

XXXVIII.

Those taught in giving to abound,
Taught to bear their tithings in
In a basket passed around
They placed their free-will offering;
They had been taught that doing good
Is a true sacrifice with God.

Ministry.

XXXIX.

The offerings made, a prayerful pause,
Yet there no restlessness was seen,
Soon an elder brother arose,
One of countenance serene,
And holding out the Sacred Book,
Said: "Into the word of God we'll look."

XL.

He then a portion slowly read,
Next a clear outline of it gave,
How that Christ who once was dead,
Became victorious o'er the grave,
And then the heavenward path He trod
That He might lead men to God.

XLI.

Now on yonder throne He lives,
Yet a tender heart is His,
Out of which in grace He gives,
Life, love and peace and highest bliss,
And so may every trusting one,
Receive rich treasures from the Son.

THE MEETING

XLII.

His words were clear, yet not cold,
Such as the mind illuminate,
Some things were "new" and others "old,"
Both teaching souls to contemplate
The beauty of their common Lord,
The Living in, the written Word.

XLIII.

He understood the things he taught,
And felt their power within his soul,
His teaching was with unction fraught,
The listening mind it did enthrall,
And thus the souls for whom Christ died
Were comforted and edified.

XLIV.

The word through no coarse medium passed,
Nor bore it taint of carnal mind,
Which oft the bloom of truth doth blast,
Instead of blessing left behind;
There's little but distress and pain,
To wearied hearers doth remain.

THE MEETING

XLV.

How much the wayworn Christian needs
Such food to strengthen him for toil,
How oft the life is choked with weeds,
Impoverishing the fruitful soil,
So that the Sower fails to find
Rich fruits according to His mind.

XLVI.

How many saints are still unfed,
Like sheep that live in Lo-debar,
Are by no skilfull shepherd led,
They often weak and sickly are,
They to the tender Shepherd Chief
Are but a source of care and grief.

THE MEETING

Praise.

XLVII.

This ministry led to a song
Of question, answer and reply
Through which the mind was borne along
Into a day fast drawing nigh
When those who now on earth do roan
Shall with the Lord be all at home:—

“When shall I see Thy face,
Saviour divine?
When shall I take my place
Where Thou dost shine?
Do not I long to be,
Jesus, my Lord, with Thee?
Hast Thou not chosen me?
Am I not Thine?

Patience, beloved, awhile,
Faith must be tried;
Under hope's rainbow smile
Tears will be dried.
Swiftly time's sands shall run,
Soon shall the goal be won,
Let my behest be done—
Meekly abide.

THE MEETING

Lord, I am satisfied,
Waiting release;
Crossing the desert wide
Thou art my peace.
Be Thine own Word my stay,
Till, at the break of day,
Shadows shall flee away,
Trouble shall cease.

Only a little while
Thou art away;
Here, even here, Thy smile
Turns night to day.
O joy beyond compare,
Meeting Thee in the air!
Soon, Lord, Thy home to share,
Soon, and for aye!

Home! how that word so sweet
Thrills through the heart;
Home! where the children meet
Never to part.
Then like Thee I shall be,
Thy blood was shed for me!
Then Jesus shall I see
Just as Thou art!"

THE MEETING

Gifts.

XLVIII.

Though Christendom has faithless been,
Oft making compacts with the world,
Dazzled by its tinsel sheen,
Has e'en the rebel flag unfurled
Against the Covenanted Word
And thus against the holy Lord!

XLIX.

Yet to those who've loyal been,
To what they knew to be from God,
And kept a spiritual conscience clean,
And trembled lest the chastening rod
Should be their portion should they stray
From His own most perfect way!:

L.

To such in giving grace benign,
He ever stoops to meet the need,
To such He does His "gifts" consign,
Who to His holy will give heed;
Among them yet such gifts remain,
That petty tyrants can't restrain.

THE MEETING

LI.

Yes! God has given gifts to men,
Gifts that earth's gold could never buy,
Some gifts are not unlike a pen,
Held by the hand of grace on high,
To write pure truth upon the soul
Which shall remain while ages roll.

LII.

It is the privilege of all,
To worship God without restraints,
Yet how few have heard His call,
To minister His truth to saints,
Yet self-sent men to-day abound,
Who are but "cumberers of the ground."

LIII.

Without "gift" as well as grace,
They claim a "right" that's but a claim,
They thrust themselves into a place,
Not their's to fill; and, oh, the shame,
They cause the godly oft to groan,
Because for "bread" they give "a stone."

THE MEETING

LIV.

Such oft bring into disrepute,
The ways of truth with men of thought
Who sometimes ask "Can this be fruit,
The Spirit in those men have wrought?"
One answer only could there be,
"His ways and theirs do not agree."



THE MEETING

Intercession.

LV.

Prayer brought the meeting to its close,
Prayer of the intercessory kind,
Such as the well-taught Christian knows,
(One who has the illumined mind),
Should to the Living God ascend,
Before the meeting hour doth end.

LVI.

Prayer on behalf of crowned heads,
Prayer for such as make the laws,
Prayer for those upon sick beds,
Prayer for any in death's throes,
Prayer for such as crushed by sin,
That Christ who saves, their lives might win.

LVII.

Prayer for the parent and the child,
Prayer for the teacher and the taught,
Prayer for those who've been beguiled,
And in error's meshes caught,
Prayer that the ruler of the world,
Might from his usurped seat be hurled

THE MEETING

Order.

LVIII.

Not all God's people yet have seen,
Such a meeting as here described,
For many such have never been,
Where the order He prescribed
Is carried out with reverent care,
The Alpha and Omega prayer.

LIX.

Such order has a source Divine,
And was given through blessed Paul,
Order well laid, line upon line,
Such as God intends for all
Who'd carry out His expressed will,
And it in loyalty fulfill.

THE MEETING

Exhortation.

LX.

Ponder the portions at the head
Of this poor prose rhyme of mine,
And after thou has prayerfully read
Them, word for word and line for line,
Trust God to give the grace to bow
To His ordering here and now.

LXI.

Or pray for strength to crucify,
Thy will the pivot of thy life,
If that would rise to nullify,
Or in a measure be at strife,
With His of power to edify,
Those who Himself would glorify.

LXII.

Soon thou wilt find thyself with those
Linked in the holy bonds of love,
Whose hearts have found perfect repose
In the grand will of God above,
Who to the sectary's toils have died,
Because to them they're crucified.

THE MEETING

LXIII.

Yes! crucified to schemes of men,
And all their fierce fanatic ways,
Whose raucous voice and spiteful pen,
Produce such sad unholy frays,
That often brings the blush of shame,
To those who love that Holy Name.

LXIV.

Suffering for truth thou mightest know,
The little while that yet remains,
Let it arise from friend or foe,
Thy pains would bring eternal gains,
A happy portion thine would be
Both now and in Eternity.

LXV.

But living in new life from God,
Thou would'st its power and fullness know,
Walking a path thy Saviour trod,
That led Him into bliss through woe,
All such as follow Him will gain,
The privilege with Him to reign.

