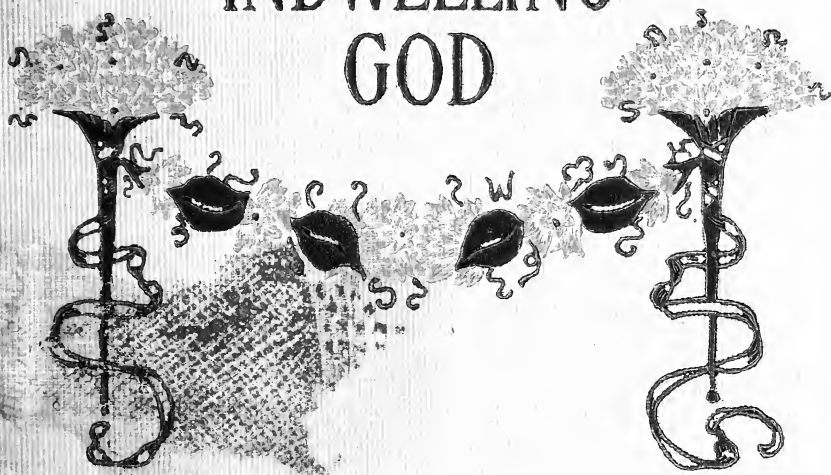


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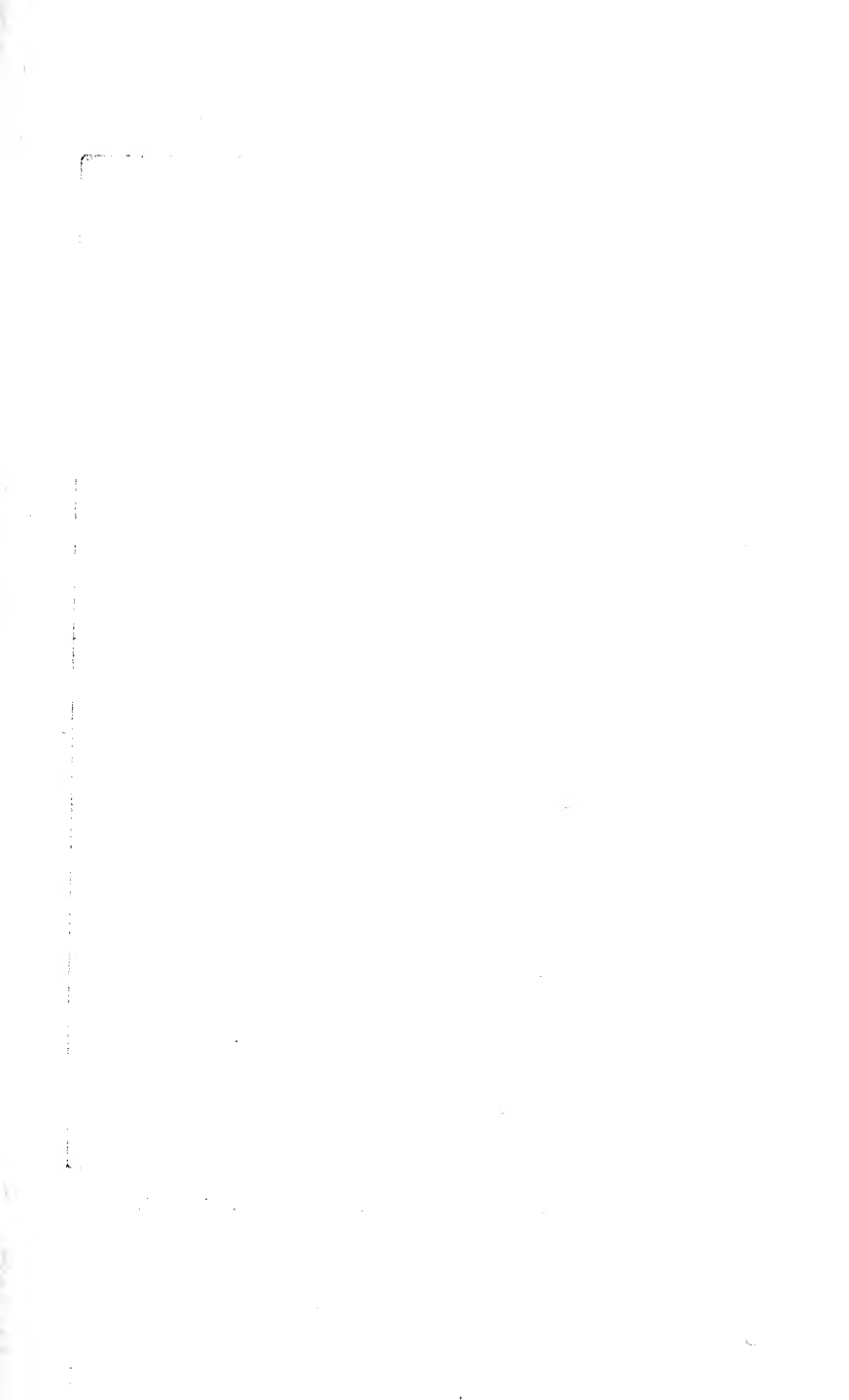
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For Character
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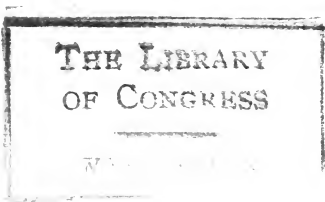
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"There is a secret chamber in each mind,
Which none can find
But He who made it, — none beside can know
Its joy or woe."



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TO
MY LIFELONG FRIEND
AND BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST

Francis E. Clark, D. D.

THROUGH WHOM GOD HAS WORKED MIGHTILY
FOR THE UPBUILDING OF THE CHURCHES AND
THE BETTERMENT OF THE WORLD
I AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATE
THIS LITTLE VOLUME



PREFACE.

THREE modest blossoms of heartsease I give thee, my reader, plucked from the hastily tilled flower border of a busy pastorate. They have been grown among the dust and din of the great city, and they lack the freshness and beauty of flowers that grow in quiet gardens. But they have sprung from a personal experience which has been greatly deepened and enriched of late through God's good grace; and I send them forth with the hope that even their faint fragrance may suggest the blessedness of the life that is hid with Christ in God, and with the prayer that before they wither they may remind some seeker after truth of the fadeless joys which he may find who walks with the Master in the King's gardens.

Berkeley Temple, Boston, Mass.

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PART I.
FOR POWER

THE FATHER ALMIGHTY.

“In him we live and move, and have our being.”

“HE is the author of all life. In this sense he is not merely our Father as Christians, but the Father of mankind; and not merely the Father of mankind, but the Father of creation; and in this way the sublime language of the prophet may be taken as true literally. ‘The morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.’ The deeps, the fountains, the rills, all unite in one hymn of praise, one everlasting hallelujah to God the Father, the Author of their being.”

“Within thy circling power I stand;
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God.”



THE INDWELLING GOD.

FOR POWER.

The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people.
— Ps. 68: 35.

“**P**OWER belongeth unto God,” says David, and no one had a larger sense of the power of God than did he. He saw God in everything. All the forces and laws of nature were only expressions of the divine omnipotence. As he stood out under the star-sprinkled dome of night, and with rapt soul gazed upon the swinging constellations, he said, reverently, “It is God’s handiwork.” As he stood upon the seashore and saw the reluctant and angry waters churned into foam, and made to roll and break into mighty waves upon the beach, by the relentless hand of the storm spirit, he exclaimed, “The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.”

As he saw the storm-wrack, leaden and ominous, lifting its flashing and thunderous expanse above the horizon, and casting its chill shadow across the fields, which seemed to cower and shrink in anticipation of the tempest, he said, "Thou art the God that doest wonders. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world; the earth trembled and shook."

And as he witnessed the returning spring coming with gay apparel and smiling face from the ice dungeons of the winter; as he saw the fountains bursting their ice shackles, and start off with a song down the gorges of the Judean hills, and the trees, from some mysterious force from within, weave for themselves garments of softest green, and the grass thrusting its millions of spearlets up through the sere brown carpet of the earth, he exclaims, "He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man."

All was of God, and from God. He was the controlling spirit among the stars, and in the affairs of men; the God of nature and of nations. "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off

upon the sea, which stilleth the noise of the seas, and the tumult of the people.”

And yet, says David, God gives of his strength and power to his people. There is a vital connection between omnipotence and finite weakness, whereby the latter can be so changed that it will have not a few of the characteristics, and not a little of the powers, of the former.

There is little Benjamin, for example, the smallest and the weakest of the tribes, and there are the princes of Judah and Zebulun and Naphtali,—all human, all weak. Yet God commanded their strength. He made them great. It is he who can rebuke the company of spearmen. He can scatter the people who delight in war.

“Ascribe ye strength unto God. His excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds. O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places; the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.”

Power belongeth unto God. God giveth power unto man. Here in a nutshell is the summary of the world's history.

Man in the world is like Aladdin before his good genius. By complying with certain conditions he becomes possessed of marvellous powers, and can command vast treasures. He is like a man in a good man's storehouse, having the keys to many

storerooms in his hands, and permission to help himself to the stores. It is as though some archangel, having been intrusted with all the riches and forces of nature, had made for himself a vast and magnificent citadel, furnished with all sorts of compartments, where under lock and key were placed the secret springs which control the world's destiny. Here in one great room is the massed wealth of the world's Klondikes; here the garnered and sifted knowledge of the world's libraries; here room after room containing the delicately adjusted machinery which controls the mysterious forces of nature; and here, man in the midst of all, delegated and empowered by the master of the citadel to open every door, and make use of every treasure, and manipulate every piece of machinery.

This is man as David saw him, only a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor, made to have dominion over creation, and with all things under his feet. This is man as Christ saw him when he said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And this is man as Paul saw him when he said, "All things are yours."

This is a truth which astounds our small faith, and makes most of us like paralyzed gold-seekers in the midst of boundless but unappropriated treasures. We do not believe our senses. We say, It cannot

be true. It is one of the old doctrines of our faith, but dressed in the language of modern thought it has appeared to many as quite a new discovery.

God is the centre and source of all power. He is the fountain of all life and activity, the dynamo which supplies the universe with energy. Nature in its manifoldness of form and force is but the varied expression of his omnipotence.

Different parts of material nature become channels and instruments of this omnipotence in varying degrees, according to their constitution and conditions. God, as an omnipotent life force, for example, gives strength and power to certain combinations of inert matter, called germs and seeds, as they lie amid the dull clods of earth, and forthwith they spring up in multitudinous beauty in trees and grass and flowers.

God, as the omnipotent mechanical force, gives strength and power to every atom of material dust in his universe, and forthwith the stars with balanced attractions, called gravitation, swing into their orbits, and move in paths so clearly defined and regular that their position in space can be foretold a thousand years hence, and every object on this earth of ours becomes so related to the earth's centre, and so drawn to it, that the divine strength and power thus operating through it become known as an established and unvarying law.

And again, God, as an omnipotent electrical or magnetic force, gives strength and power to certain forms of matter, or to matter under certain conditions, and forthwith we have the aurora borealis, the thunder-storm, the cyclone, the magnetic compass, the telegraph, the telephone, and the electric lights.

And so in a thousand other ways God is filling his creation with varied life and energy by imparting of his own power to the things which he has made and fitted for its reception and use. This power divine, this omnipotent energy, is like an atmosphere enveloping all created things. You cannot tell whence it comes or whither it goes. It presses around all things and upholds all things, and all that is needed is for a person or a thing to be under certain conditions to receive it and to be energized by it. The seed, because it contains the proper conditions of embryotic life, receives into itself the all-encompassing power as a life force, and becomes a growing tree or plant, such as a pebble or a piece of coal cannot become.

The rain-drops, because they have conformed to certain conditions, and reached a certain density, yield to the force of gravitation and fall to the earth, while the clouds from which they fell must remain floating above the earth so long as they are uncondensed.

The iron wire and the copper wire, because they

are metal, receive and transmit the omnipotent power which we call the electrical current, while the glass rod, because it is not rightly conditioned, is useless as a transmitter.

Everything depends upon the conditions of receptivity. God is everywhere. God's power is everywhere waiting to be used. It is used in a thousand ways. It is constantly finding the conditions under which it can manifest itself; and yet it is safe to say that as yet, even on this our globe, which is but a bit of star-dust among the heavenly worlds, we have not yet witnessed a tithe of the power which God is ready and willing to manifest through the things and the people which he has created here. As a world and as a race we are yet in the childhood of our experiences of the power of God. We have not yet found our working adjustments with him. We are groping ignorantly and blindly after the harmonious conditions under which we shall become the free channel and the facile instrument of the power divine,—after that universal atonement, or at-onement, whereby all things sensate and insensate shall be reconciled to God, and made to work in delightful accord with him; the conditions which Paul had in mind when he said, "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God;" that is, for the manifestation of the strength and the power of God through those who

are his children. "For," he says, "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." All creation, even the physical world, through many birth pangs occasioned by its slow evolutions from chaos to order, and the tardy development of those conditions which are essential to make it the perfect instrument of the divine power, has been groaning in expectancy, waiting eagerly for the time when even its unfertile deserts shall blossom as the rose, its lions shall lie down with its lambs, and all of its crude conditions shall be so perfected that the divine power may be manifested through them in the interests of a redeemed race, with the least friction and the least suffering.

This millennial realization of the power of God has its special and striking prophecies in the wonderful discoveries and developments of the present century. Never was there a century which has made more direct connections with omnipotence, in a physical and material way, than this nineteenth century has made.

Just think what physical energy was lying dormant in the earth and sea and air a hundred years ago, which was not even dreamed of by the generation of that time. God was all around them, waiting to bear their speech and their commerce on wings fleeter than those of the wind, waiting to open to

them vast stores of treasures, and they knew it not. They plodded over rough roads in bungling stage-coaches, when they might have been borne in plush comfort on steel rails. They waited long for momentous tidings which might have been transmitted in the fraction of a second. They lived and died in ignorance of the great world, while, had they but connected with the powers of God which their children appropriated, that world might have been laid open before them every morning.

It only took a few men who were a little more thoughtful and patient, and who had a little more faith in the unseen than their fellows, to discover and apply the physical powers of God, so as to change this world of the nineteenth century so completely that our grandfathers of the old century would hardly know it. One man, Thomas Edison, has revolutionized the whole world by his marvellous inventions. That is, God gave to him strength and power, just as he gave them to Bezaleel of old, by giving to him an understanding of the conditions under which the divine power acts. This discovery and understanding of conditions makes the inventor. Edison making his eighteen hundred experiments before he discovered the proper substance for the incandescent light, and his six or seven thousand experiments before he solved the problem of preparing the products of his great iron mills for the blast-

furnace, is the most striking example in history of a man waiting consciously or unconsciously for the revelation of the secret of God, and for that endowment of power which was to give him control of a vast physical realm.

Thomas Edison, standing as the central figure in that new town of Edison, N. J., watching that gigantic steam-shovel as, with ravenous jaws and spiteful puffs and snorts, it eats its way into the bowels of the iron mountain, surrounded with those Titanic crushers which make nothing of reducing bowlders of ten tons to powder, and with those magnets which gather the iron from the dust by the car-load, and with those engines which act like intelligent beings as they carry on the wonderful process from the time that the ore is snatched from its native bed to the time when it is reduced to briquettes of pure iron and sent to the blast-furnace — Edison, standing in the midst of all these marvels, in the white light of the electric lamps, and within calling distance of the whole commercial world as it stands at the other end of his telephone, is the century's conspicuous illustration of how God gives material power to those who rightly seek it.

Not long ago, the town of Edison was a rocky, useless wilderness. Its hills were too rugged for cultivation, and not rich enough in ore to warrant the usual processes of reduction; but a man of faith

came there ; and lo, the mountains are being removed and cast into the midst of the furnace. Barren and rugged though the place was, like every other part of God's world it was full of strength and power. Iron by the million tons was scattered all through its rough rocks, and it was only waiting for the man who should understand and apply God's conditions of extracting it.

I have dwelt somewhat at length upon this side of our subject, because I believe that what we call the natural and supernatural are but the two sides of the same shield.

That God gives strength and power in a physical and material way to those who conform to certain conditions, is the blazing and much talked about truth of this age. That he gives strength in a spiritual way is just as certain, though it may not be so generally acknowledged ; and yet it is coming to be more generally talked about than it was. A new interest is springing up on all sides in this subject of spiritual power. It is not always talked about in the old-time religious terms. It sometimes takes on a dress of language which quite disguises the old truth from Christian eyes, and yet whatever there is of truth about it is the old truth.

Theosophy, Christian Science, and even Mental Science, are all based on the fundamental fact that the Father of spirits touches and inspires and ener-

gizes man's spirit, and gives him a certain control over spiritual things.

The rapid spread of these various schools of thought and belief is a part of the evidence that a mighty reaction is setting in against the gross materialism of the former part of the century, and a more pronounced type of this evidence is the deepening interest of the people in the spiritual writings of such men as F. B. Meyer and Andrew Murray and other representatives of the so-called Keswick school.

I have sometimes thought that the very things which some have most dreaded, these scientific discoveries, and this phenomenal advance in material prosperity, have prepared the race for a spiritual advance. God has given man so much in a material way for the asking, he has astonished us so frequently by his lavish impartations of power over material things, that we almost unconsciously say to ourselves, "Why not expect great things of him in a spiritual way?" And so I do not see in our present absorption in the scientific triumphs of the age that tendency to a fatal materialism which some seem to find there, but rather a preparation for what I sincerely believe to be near at hand,—a great spiritual revival in which the manifestations of the power of the Holy Ghost will be as much grander and more comprehensive than anything heretofore

witnessed, as the material development of this age is superior to that of any past age.

God is just as willing to give spiritual power as he is to give any other kind of power, and he will give it whenever his conditions are complied with.

The Bible labors to impress this truth upon its readers. It represents God as more than willing to make every soul which he has created a mighty spiritual force in the world. Power, limitless power, like the iron in our hills, like the electricity in our earth and air, is only waiting for the man of faith.

To appropriate the forces of nature and utilize them for humanity is a very blessed and wonderful thing to do, but it is not half as great or blessed as to be able to control the vast enginery of God's spiritual powers, and so to be workers together with him in the redemption of the world.

To have the power to win men to Christ and make them holy is far better than to have the power merely to make them more comfortable in a physical way.

To stand in the barren wastes of selfishness among the chaotic ruins of primeval sin, among prodigals and magdalens, of whom the world says, "It is no use; there is not ore enough to pay for reduction," and to be able by the application of the mighty powers of God to make them vessels meet for

his kingdom, is better, infinitely better, than to be able to reduce the Jersey mountains to the appliances of commerce.

“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” This was the promise of the risen Christ to the little band of disciples who were going out to possess the world. The Holy Ghost came upon them, and they had power, — a strange new power which seemed to the world like madness, but which was the only power which could make a mad world sane, — the only power which could crush the stony heart of man, separate its ore from its dross, and fit it for heavenly uses.

How wonderfully this power worked! You know if you have read the world’s history. You know how it has possessed and transformed men and nations, how it has made the humblest members of the race its mightiest spiritual conquerors; how it has strengthened men for toil and suffering and death; how it has lifted men from shame to honor, from slavery to freedom, from the slums of sin to sainthood. You know how, through this power, all that is best and highest has come into being, and how, without this power, Christian religion would be but a lifeless philosophy in a lifeless world, a dead battery lying against a pulseless body.

Our usual confession of faith declares, “We believe that all who experience faith in Christ are

renewed by the Holy Spirit, and by him sanctified and made partakers of eternal life."

The power of the Holy Ghost does two things for a man.

First, it changes his inner life and purpose. It transforms the dormant root into a growing, blossoming plant; the dead, black carbon into an incandescent, throbbing coil. This is the old doctrine of regeneration, or, to use Christ's words, of being born again, and it is the central doctrine of our orthodox faith. Nothing can serve in its stead. Reformation, moral resolution, changed environment, are not, and cannot be, substituted for this deep, all-powerful, all-transforming grip of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of man. God, and God only, can save the soul. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The power that can create a world can recreate it. The power that can generate a world can regenerate it, and there is no other power outside of God that can do either. "The Holy Ghost," as some one has truly said, "can take a man dead in trespasses and sins and make him alive." Yes; he can take a man by nature and by practice vile and corrupt, and so change him that he shall have God's nature, think God's thoughts, will what God wills, love what God loves,

and hate what God hates. He is doing this every day. He is saving the chief of sinners, the wickedest man in New York, and Boston, and London, and he is doing it just as easily as he is making growing trees out of the dead earth, or palpitating light out of the inert darkness which surrounds the dynamo. He is giving strength and power to souls dead in selfishness, so that they are able to rise up with commanding influence, and sometimes carry not only their families, but the whole community, over into the fields of aspiration and holy desire and faith.

The other thing which the power of the Holy Ghost does for a man is to develop him, or, to use the old word, sanctify him. "From strength to strength" is the watchword of the spiritual as well as of the material world. No inventor stops with his first crude discovery. The telephone of to-day is a vast improvement upon the instrument which first transmitted the human voice. The omnipotent power in the material world is forever working towards perfection, and so in the spiritual world we may have the fulness of that power just in proportion as we are willing and fitted to receive it; and just here most of us are weak when we ought to be strong. I believe Mr. Torrey speaks the truth when he says: "To the extent that we understand and claim for ourselves the Holy Spirit's work, to that

extent do we obtain for ourselves the fulness of power in Christian life and service that God has provided for us in Christ. A very large portion of the church know and claim for themselves a very small part of that which God has made possible for them in Christ, because they know so little of what the Holy Spirit can do for us and longs to do for us."

To the extent that we *understand* and *claim* for ourselves the Holy Spirit's work. These are two of the conditions of using the power and increasing it. There is iron all around us, mountains of it, the air is full of reducing forces, the trouble is that we do not make our shovels and crushers and magnets large enough.

O ye of little faith, how large and strong, how rich, you might be, if you would only use what God has made ready for you! You content yourself with a few pickings from the field, when you might have your cars loaded with treasure. You stop with a few flashes of the power, when you might have a steady increasing current, which would fill your whole life with light, and illumine the entire community. You ask little, petty things of God, and hardly expect to receive them, when you might ask and receive great things. You play Christian. You go through the forms of religion like children playing with a toy telephone, when you might make a

connection with men's souls, and speak to them words that would save them. You are worried and troubled about many things. You sing morbid hymns, and live at a poor dying rate. You mourn because you are doing so little for Christ. You think that you have no jewels in your crown, that your spring of salvation is getting stagnant, that the world, the flesh, and the devil are too active and too assertive for you, that the world is going to the bad, when all the while you are a child of him who made the world, and a joint heir with Christ to the power that is to save it.

“Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend and bring
Some tokens of thy grace.

Dost thou not dwell in all thy saints,
And seal them heirs of heaven?
When wilt thou banish our complaints
And show our sins forgiven?”

I would be glad enough to remove the veil of unreality which is so often drawn around this spiritual side of our truth, and bring you face to face with it as you stand face to face and fully convinced before the material side of it. If I could do this, I should confer a far greater blessing on you than I could possibly do by discovering for you God's

secret of extracting gold from sea-water, or transmuting carbon into diamonds.

Would that every Christian might know as he has never known before the secret of the Lord in this higher realm of his being; that he might know more of that comfort and peace and liberty and joy which come from a consciousness of resting absolutely in the power of God.

I hardly dare to tell you what I believe to be possible to him who has been endued with this power from on high, for you might say it is mystical and visionary, and yet I go not beyond the language of Scripture when I say, "All things are possible to him that believeth." "Ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done." These are the promises which stagger the thing which we call our faith, but they have back of them the power which controls all forces and all treasures, — a power which is giving to scientific faith about everything which it asks in the physical world, even the control of the thunderbolt, and the removal of mountains, and which I am quite sure will open to the coming generations a world of spiritual wonders which

doth not yet appear to our dull eyes. A few here and there anticipate the coming conquests of faith even in this generation ; a few like Müller are proving the promises here and now ; a few in humbler walks of life are mighty spiritual powers. May God increase that number and bring on the promised day of Israel.

PART II.
FOR CHARACTER

THE SON INCARNATE.

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

“THIS is the true belief in Christ. It regards him as an ever-flowing fountain of spiritual and moral life, divine, because the image of the unseen God; divine, because bringing God to us and us to him. It makes him the ever-living, ever-present, head of the church, the human brother as well as the celestial Master. It gives our hearts the dearest object of love. . . . It supplies us with a friendship which earth cannot give nor take away. In this view of Christ is progress, growth, sincerity, union, and peace. This is the Master and Friend whom we need; who says to us always, ‘Abide in me and I in you.’”

“O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate’er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.”



FOR CHARACTER.

Christ in you the hope of glory. — COL. 1:27.



BECAME deeply interested some time ago in a sketch of the life of Carlo Antonio Pensenti, an untutored monk who lived in Genoa, and whose name has become immortal because of a single work of art which he executed under remarkable circumstances.

In the city of Genoa was an immense block of ivory which had excited the wonder of the people there for many years. While Pensenti was looking at it one day, the thought took possession of him that it was his duty to carve from it a figure of the Saviour on the cross. A strange thought for a man who knew little or nothing of the sculptor's art, and one which would have drawn much ridicule from the monk's friends, had they known of it. But he managed to secure the precious piece of ivory, and in the quiet of his cell, with prayer and wonderful patience, he worked over it for many months.

The Saviour to whom he had devoted his life

seemed ever before him. For him to live was Christ. The vision of the Crucified filled and inspired his soul, and, flowing out, as it were, through his unpractised fingers, materialized itself in the pure white ivory before him. At the end of four years the image was finished, and it was pronounced a "work worthy of the great sculptors of ancient Greece, or the old Italian masters, possessing the same characteristics as their most celebrated productions, — exquisite beauty combined with perfect accuracy and purity of style."

The figure was purchased by the American consul at Genoa, and carried to Florence, where it was criticised and admired by Mr. Powers and other celebrated artists. It was afterwards exhibited in London, where the first artists and anatomists pronounced it a masterpiece of anatomical accuracy, and manly beauty, and divine expression; and, in course of time, it found its way to this country, and became a permanent adornment in a great metropolitan cathedral.

When these facts came to my knowledge, there came to my mind the words which I have chosen for my text, "Christ in you the hope of glory," and the words seem to me to take on a new meaning in the light of this incident. Here was a man unacquainted with the technicalities of art, yet so filled with the image of Christ, so moved by his religious

feeling, that he was enabled to work out for himself even an earthly glory which hardly pales before that of the great masters.

Surely this suggests the truth that Christ in us is not only the hope or guaranty of the heavenly glory, but he is also our surety of the highest success here in this life. In other words, the religious element is essential to the highest type of human glory here and hereafter.

“Glory,” as here used by the apostle, means magnificent completeness, radiant fulfilment, blessed fruition.

It differs according to the thing to which it relates. There is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another glory of the stars. There is one glory of the trees, and another glory of the flowers, and another glory of the grass.

Everything has its possible glory stage, its time when it is at its best. The sun is in its glory when its own luminous atmosphere is least convulsed by darkening tempests. The moon is in her glory when, full-orbed, she lifts her head above the horizon and floods the earth with her silver splendor. The trees and flowers are in their glory when the conditions of their growth are such as to bring them to their completest stature and beauty. In each case, the hope, or assurance, of their glory depends chiefly upon certain conditions within themselves, —

a spirit, as it were, within, shaping things to a certain end, working towards fulfilment.

And so, passing over into the human realm of human affairs, everything has its glory goal, its "consummation devoutly to be wished."

There is one glory of art and another of science ; one glory of poetry, another of statecraft ; and it could easily be shown how Christ is in each of these the source of their highest perfection.

Take the realm of art. From the time when Bezaleel, the son of Uri, was filled with the spirit of God to devise curious works in gold and silver and brass, most of the greatest sculptures and paintings have been those associated with, or expressing, the religious sentiments. Angelico, we are told, never began any work, whether an elaborate fresco or an illumination for a missal, without praying, and he always carried out the first impression, believing it to be an inspiration ; and it was this spirit of rapt religious devotion which gave birth to the few transcendent masterpieces which occupy the highest places in the galleries of genius.

The same is true of music. There is an old legend that the practice of antiphones was introduced through St. Ignatius, who had heard the angels singing psalms in alternate strains before the throne of God. However this may be, everybody recognizes in the sacred music of the great com-

posers "a glory which excelleth." Its theme is Christ. It lifts us above the rasping cares of life, and makes us feel that harps of gold and angelic choirs are no vain imagination. One must be convinced, when Handel's "gorgeous music peals upon the amazed ear," that the great master had listened to the music of the spheres, and that when in his solitude his fingers swept over the keys, something of that holy influence encircled him, which a great artist once symbolized under the guise of the angels who guard St. Cecilia.

And then there is science, the princes of which, "on whose brow the ivy is still green, have not been slow to lift an anthem of praise to God." As we read their biographies we are impressed with their reverence for God. They found him in all his works. We hear Galileo, athrill with the inspiration of true science, saying aloud, "Sun, moon, and stars praise him." We hear Kepler, overwhelmed with what he saw among the swinging constellations, saying: "God has passed before me in the grandeur of his ways! Glorify him, ye stars, and thou, my soul, praise him!" They saw in every law the hand of God, in every discovery a new revelation of his wisdom and power.

But that phase of our truth which will most interest us is the personal one. Paul is speaking directly to the Colossians. "Christ in you," he says. These

other facts which we have been considering depend upon this personal fact. The Christ in the heart brings glory to the individual, and, through the individual, to art, science, literature, — to civilization. Now all this is but saying that to be a Christian is but fulfilling the highest end of our being. But I am aware that much misunderstanding beclouds this Pauline doctrine of Christ in us. The apostle has a great deal to say about it. He says in one place, "To me to live is Christ," and in another, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," as though his whole being had been adjusted and vitalized by some new and powerful life, which is actually the case when Christ comes into the heart. He brings with him a new life-plan and motive power, through which the highest possibilities of manhood and womanhood are achieved. It is a part of the economy of things that spirit shall have power over spirit, that soul shall work in soul. Some other than ourselves is working in and through each of us to-day. We are consciously or unconsciously moved by those about us. In a certain sense it may be said to many here to-day: "You are in your friend the hope of glory. You are making him to be what he could never be without you." Sometimes one person dwells in another through the power of love. In this sense the pure and beautiful Beatrice was in Dante the hope of his glory. Meeting her when

she was but nine years old, he came under the wondrous spell of her influence. Though he saw but little of her during her lifetime, she grew in his mind and imagination to be the embodiment of divine truth itself. She was his Lady Beautiful, his inspiration, his guiding star. Her image within him stirred all the poetic emotions of his great soul, kindled his mighty genius, and resulted in that immortal tribute to woman, the Divine Comedy. Had it not been for Beatrice, Dante's fame might have been shorn of half of its glory.

Sometimes one person dwells in another through the power of instruction. In this sense Aristotle was in Alexander the Great the hope of his glory. Alexander himself confesses this. He admits that the education which he received at the hands of the great philosopher shaped his destiny, and secured for him the conquests of after-years. Aristotle's power in disciplining the judgment was great. He instilled into his pupil's mind the principles which helped him to make far-reaching plans and to execute them wisely. His teachings went with the conqueror everywhere.

Sometimes it happens that one person dwells in another and becomes to him the hope of his glory in both of these senses. Love and instruction work together. The life of John Wesley is familiar to you. You remember how his mother was in him in

this double sense the hope of his glory. A poor ignorant ignoramus, the world called him, when he was a boy. No common ambition was his, much less a spark of genius. Sleepy, unaspiring, with apparently but one redeeming feature, — an intense love for his mother. Ah, yes ! and in that love was the surety of his future greatness. She, though a humble woman, was a great woman. She conceived the idea which has since developed into the greatest ecclesiastic system of modern times. She spurred John Wesley on to great achievement. She was his beloved friend and teacher. His love for her moved him to receive her teaching, and thus she was in him constantly directing his life to its goal.

This thing is of frequent occurrence. Many a mother is in her son his hope of honesty and purity. He goes away from her into the great city, and yet not away from her, for she is with him, in him, still. Her image is before his eyes, her instructions in his memory. He is tempted, evil forces conspire to rob him of his manhood. He comes near falling, but the mother-face and the mother-voice interpose. He says, "I will not do this thing, for her sake," and so is saved.

The question frequently comes, What is it to be a Christian ? It is a pity that the difference is not more easily detected than it sometimes is, for a life which has Christ in it ought to reveal something of

the glory which belongs to it. The firefly shines because it has within it that which must shine. Put him with a host of other insects in the dark, and his flight alone will be traced by its pulsations of light. Imprison him in your hand, and he will illumine his little dungeon with his unquenched flame. Let a man really take Christ into his heart, and the Christ glory must inevitably appear in his life. Of course it will. And why? Because God who made the soul knows what the soul needs to bring it to its best estate. Left to itself, it comes short of its glory. Sin is an ugly fact. Man under the power of evil goes down to shame. He needs for his betterment, for his salvation, just such a personality in his life as that of Jesus Christ. As Beatrice inspired Dante, as Aristotle inspired Alexander, as the mother inspires her son, so, in a higher, holier sense, did Jesus inspire John and Peter and Paul. So he ought to inspire his disciples to-day. I care not into what department of life you carry your explorations. I care not in what your block of unhewn ivory may consist, it shall bring you the highest glory only when you carve upon it the form and features of the perfect One.

Perhaps that unhewn block lies before you this morning in the form of educational aspirations. You are striving after culture. Now culture, unless it be crowned and interfused with religion, is but a

soulless, mechanical statue. You may perfect and polish it, you may spend months and years upon its details, but still it will lack that indescribable something which alone can give it a place in the niche of the immortals. Great scholars there are who never acknowledge their allegiance to Jesus Christ. Cultured men, so called, there are, all about us, who condemn the Bible to the limbo of myths and fables; and yet the fact still stands that the scholar who tries to ignore Christ, or to read God out of history and science, is very much like that writer who is trying to prove that there was no Shakespeare. The plain, common-sense man cannot help feeling that there is something lacking in such a scholar's mental make-up, — a little daft, as the Scotch say. The full-rounded scholar is he whose higher religious nature has expanded with his lower intellectual nature, so that all the material facts which are gathered into the one find their spiritual reflection in the other. How it enlarges, how it glorifies, a man, to be able to interpret all his knowledge in the light of a religious faith! Such a man is lifted above the level of earth. His brow is aflame with the glory of the Beulah heights. Well says Professor Shairp, in his little book on "Culture and Religion," which, by the way, I wish you all might read: —

"There is no more forlorn sight than that of a man of highly gifted, elaborately cultivated in-

telleet, with all the other capacities of his nature strong and active, but those of faith and reverence dormant."

And perhaps your unhewn block of ivory is made up of business hopes and plans. You stand before it and say: "Ah! I shall make something fine out of this. I will hew me out a success which will make men wonder." And so you acquaint yourselves with the maxims of trade; but even here there is no real glory for you except the Christ himself is breathed from your daily life into your work. Otherwise your ivory will take on under your hands the pinched and careworn features of that miserly god, Mammon.

That is a sad state of mind into which some men get when they mistake the glory of material success for the glory of character; when they think the public is admiring them, while it is only wondering at their crowded warerooms and overflowing tills. I know that men will tell you that strict integrity and stanch virtue are impossible things in the busy world of industry and commerce, that character largely flavored with piety is at a discount, that he who would succeed must throw away his conscience. Better fail if this be so, for a conscience thrown away is sure to come back again, and with a sting in it. But is it true that there can be no Christ in business? Has it come to this, that he whose indwell-

ing spirit has brought the world up to its present stage of civilization, whose principles have changed the thievishness of the savage into Christian commerce, can no longer have a place in the realm which he has purified and glorified? Since the mists of night are scattered and you have come out into the day where the grass revels and the flowers open their bright eyes in the sunlight, will you dispense with the sun? Will you push it back below the horizon? That is what they would do who tell you that the gospel is not for business.

Grant that it is hard to live honestly, to show the spirit of Christ in the rough jostlings of business life. Herein is the glory of such characters as those of Buxton and Dodge. Their Christian principles carried them over the difficulties. Says Edmund Burke: "One source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labor to effect it, the idea is grand. The Druid circle in Keswick, England, has no ornament about it, but those huge masses of stone set on end turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work." And just so I think we are impressed by the rugged characters which we find standing stanch and firm in their Christian integrity in the business circle. We think of the force within, and through their lives Christ seems to us doubly glorious.

But I turn to another application of our text. The glory of human life is to be *blessed* here and for evermore. We all seek happiness. We try to find it now in this thing, and now in that. We chase with butterfly carelessness the fleeting joy of the moment, or with philosophic forethought we plan for the joys of the future. Now I am quite sure that he who takes Christ into his life gets the most real enjoyment now, and the promise of the greatest blessedness hereafter.

Take the present life, for example. Put Christ anywhere but at the centre of your being, put your will against his will, and the whole life is out of gear. It rattles, and jolts, and meanders, like a derailed car. Christ knew about this kind of moral and spiritual derailment, and out of his infinite pity came the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As though he had said: "Your unrest and discouragement are the result of your being far from me. Take me into your heart, and I shall become your spring of blessedness, your hope of glorious peace."

Temptation takes a great deal from a man's best achievement. More than anything else it robs him of his joy, and blurs the glory of his old age. I think of the temptations which with unseen fingers are tarnishing some of our lives or picking away the

graces from our characters as those Mexicans about whom Mr. Miller writes picked away the rubies and emeralds from the prostrate idol on the uplands. I think how these temptations vary in form and intensity, coming to Joseph and David and Peter in just the way they least expect them to come, but always coming where the link in the virtues is weakest, and the possibilities of shame and remorse are greatest.

Then, too, there are sorrows which seem to rob us of half the glory of this present life. I think of the trials which have come to many, changing the brightness of the noontime into the gloom of midnight. I think of plans frustrated, hopes crushed. Yes, I think of these temptations and these trials, and then I think of two promises: one to the tempted man, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and one to the mourner, "Thy sorrow shall be turned into joy."

I cannot tell you how Christ in the heart fulfils these promises; I only know that he does. As Dr. William Taylor once beautifully said: "Two persons may sit side by side in the sanctuary, parent and child, wife and husband, friends, partners, or neighbors. The one enjoys this indwelling Christ; to the other it is but a dream. The one sees not Christ in anything; the other sees him in song and sacrament, in labor and sacrifice, in pain and pleasure.

Indeed, you must extract his very consciousness from him before you can rob him of this experience. These two persons are different, and they will be different eternally unless the grace which has transformed the one shall renew the other."

And all this leads on to thoughts of the life to come, — the thought which was doubtless in Paul's mind when he wrote to the Colossians.

The glory of the soul hereafter will depend not upon its environment, but upon that spirit which is within it.

The glory of the lily is latent in the bulb. The life of heaven is earth's consummate blossom. As we are here in heart, we shall be there in life and action. The grandeur and beauty of the full-blown life of an immortal soul none can know save the angels who dwell in the supernal gardens.

When these faculties have been touched and vitalized by the Christ within there should be no limit to their growth. "Beloved, now are we sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

O, the inspiration of this thought! How it ought to move us to high endeavor!

How mean and unworthy all selfish living seems when we stand in the light which streams upon us from the yet unattained heights of our Christian manhood and womanhood!

Let us walk in this light. Let us make Christ a

power within. Let us show forth his spirit. Let us give up the sins which hold us back from the full fruition of our hope of glory, and let us be able to say with the apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

PART III.
FOR SERVICE

THE SPIRIT OPERATIVE.

“ But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

“ THE Holy Spirit is not a freak of the divine nature. He is the divine nature itself manifested in power, in proportion as God is manifested in character and in life.”

“ We want to get possession of the power and use it. God wants the power to get possession of us and use us. If we give ourselves to the power to rule in us, the power will give itself to us to rule through us.”

“ 'Tis God the Spirit leads
In paths before unknown ;
The work to be performed is ours,
The strength is all his own.”



FOR SERVICE.

And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. — 1 COR. 12:6.

PASSING over a Massachusetts road some time ago, I was struck with the marvelous coloring of the autumn leaves. The woods were aflame with crimson banners, and the green and the gold vied with each other in their multitudinous shades. The hills looked as though a thousand Turners had been splashing the remnants from their easels over them, and in the maze and whirl of color one could almost imagine that he saw startling pictures. As I looked upon this gorgeous tapestry of the hills I remembered that, only a few weeks before, these crimsons and gold and browns were all a vivid green, and that a few weeks earlier they were a pale tender hue, like that of buds just waking into life. How quickly the hues had come and gone! How, in the ceaseless moving of the months, the same spirit of life working within had appeared now in this shade, and now in that, until at last it had burst out in this wild riot of color. Divers operations, but the same spirit.

This is the law of divine action in nature and in the human soul. Whether we take humanity as a whole or in part, we find this law working itself out in infinite variety. Paul, in the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians, is illustrating this fact.

If you have really been touched and vitalized by the divine Spirit, he says, this Spirit will be manifested in and through you in different ways ; but it is the same Spirit, whether it appears in the flaming red of Peter's character, the mellow gold of John's, or the less pronounced colors of the character of the other disciples.

The first thing to be noticed is that there is such a person as the Holy Ghost, and that he is none other than God himself, working in man. Paul is very explicit on this point. "I give you to understand," he says, "that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed." The Jews claimed to be of God when they were persecuting and crucifying Christ. This could not be. Like detects like, spirit answers to spirit, as face to face in water. God in the heart could not revile the Son of God on the cross. The divine Spirit within can but recognize the Christ without. Many a man, thinking himself a Christian, and assuming to criticise or condemn the professions of others, has been woefully mistaken as to his own faith.

"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by

the Holy Ghost." The divinity and spiritual headship of Jesus Christ come to man as a special revelation from God himself. The pure in heart shall see God. The Holy Spirit in the heart convinces us of the divine character of Christ as no miracles or arguments can convince us. He flashes this divinity upon us as he did upon Peter, when, amazed and humbled, that disciple exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" or as he did upon Thomas, when, with hesitant finger upon the nail-prints, he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!"

No person or church can monopolize the Holy Spirit. He comes to all who desire him. An earthly father is not more willing to give good gifts to his children than is God to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. The man or sect that presumes to an exclusive appropriation of the Spirit, and denies him to those who happen to hold a different opinion, or who differ from them in creed or practice, is doing just what Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for doing, in this chapter from which our text is taken. There were certain persons in the Corinthian church who were very proud of their spiritual gifts, and had a great deal to say about them. For this reason Paul felt called upon to warn the church against being misled by these ambitious and vainglorious men. Do not, he says, in substance, make the mistake of thinking that the

Holy Ghost manifests himself only in showy ways, or in pretentious sanctities. He is the direct inspirer of varied ministrations, and is often most forceful in unpretentious service.

"To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom." Such a one is not able to talk much about his religion; he is a man of few words, but his words weigh much. Five minutes with him are worth an hour with some other men. His brain is made to distil truth, not to dilute it; and when the power of the Spirit is upon him, he is one of the most helpful counsellors in Corinth.

"To another is given the word of knowledge." He is not born wise like the other man. He gets knowledge by hard work. His brain is a net which gathers fish from all seas, a repository of facts. He is not especially popular or practical. Like Gamaliel, he has no crowd at his feet; but serious people, like Paul, sit there, and when the power is upon him, he stimulates men's intellect and strengthens their souls.

"To another, faith." Quiet, retiring, yet possessed of a strongly magnetic and inspiring personality, this man stands in the community as the daysman between multitudes of Littlefaiths and the Lord. Men absorbed in worldliness lean upon him and believe in him, and all Corinth gets a glimpse of heaven through his upper window. God makes

his faith a ladder upon which men climb up out of their Sloughs of Despond to ground where he gives them a ladder of their own.

“To another, the gift of healing.” Some say this was a temporary manifestation of the Spirit, which, like the gift of miracles, was to vanish with the early disciples. Others contend that it is as common in Boston to-day as it was in Corinth, and as much a privilege of the believer as wisdom, knowledge, and faith. Sure it is, the power of spirit over matter, the tendency of thought to quell certain physical disturbances and conquer pain, and the influence of prayer and a quiet trust in God over many bodily ills, all belong to the acknowledged therapeutics of these modern times; and he who believes that it is the province of the divine Spirit in man to make him not only holy, but whole, according to John’s desire for Gaius, may be nearer right than some of us think. “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

“To another, prophecy.” The gift of vision. A John, at Patmos, with the world’s future swinging in dazzling cyclorama around him. The man and the woman of these latter days who are so full of the divine Spirit that they see and foresee events something as Christ did; who stand out in the community and in the church as fearless denouncers of

social and political corruption and mighty apostles of righteousness ; who with eye ablaze with the light of the New Jerusalem, and ear resonant with millennial music, utter their oracles of rebuke or cheer, and with divine eagerness, not unmixed with human impatience, strive to bring on the day when the golden anticipations of the ages shall be fully realized, and the Christ shall be crowned Lord of all.

“To another, discerning of spirits.” A Peter who can look through and through a man, and detect the hypocrisy and imposition which are lurking in him, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. An Elisha who is able to see in the heart of the young Hazael a future of selfishness, murder, carnage, and devastation. The seer whom you will find in almost every band of disciples, whose spiritual insight is so keen that he can look into the souls and characters of men, detect their virtues and their vices, and lay them as bare as were the muscles of the flayed Marsyas.

“To another, divers kinds of tongues ; and to another, the interpretation of tongues.” The glottis gift, the power of the orator who sways men’s minds and controls their wills. The power of the man who is master of men’s thoughts and emotions, whose magnetic personality gives him free range through the hearts of men of every nation and tribe and tongue.

"All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man as he will." In other words, God can use every kind of talent; and when he takes full possession of a man, he uses that man most efficiently along the line of his bent. He takes him just as he finds him, with the tendencies and powers which he first implanted within him, and develops him, just as he takes a bed of bulbs and tubers in the springtime, pours his sunshine and rain over them, and brings to their glory, here a tulip and there a hyacinth, and, later on, a dahlia, a lily, or a clematis, each beautiful in its time. This coming to full-blown tuliphood or lilyhood is the working of the same spirit of life. For a tulip bulb to say: "I, and I only, have in me this life power. We tulips have a monopoly of it. If you want to get it, you must be like us, with a smooth, glossy exterior, and a straight, stiff stem, with one, and only one, blossom at the end. You hyacinths, with your gay, scented bells, and you dahlias, with your many tuberous roots and multiplied branches, reaching out in all directions, and blossoming high and low on all sides of yourselves, you make a great mistake in thinking that you have this life spirit,"—for a tulip to say this would be like what some good people are saying about other people, who believe in Young Men's Christian Associations and Christian Endeavor societies and institutional churches.

“You have too many roots and branches,” they say. “You blossom out on too many sides of life to be a channel for the Spirit. You are too secular to be saintly. Come out from the world. Be separate from it. Seek the things that are above. Be singular, stiff, and blossom tulipwise, and then we will grant that you have the gift of the Spirit.”

The mere possession of the Spirit is not enough. Power is good for nothing until it is applied and becomes operative. The spirituality that shuts its eyes, and sways to and fro, and talks pessimistically, and does little else but talk, may be of the genuine sort; but a more effective kind is that which our Saviour declared to be the one condition of discipleship, — many-sided ministration in his name. “Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these.” Here we have the application of the Spirit’s power, — not merely the possession of something, but the doing of something very practical, and very secular, because of that possession; the Spirit in us; Christ in us working out into tangible, helpful, every-day service.

This is the same truth that we have in our text and context, — divers operations, varied manifestations. The Holy Ghost within us, impelling us to visit the sick, comfort the afflicted, welcome the stranger, care for the poor, is just as truly the Holy Ghost as he is when he helps us to pray and wor-

ship. He is just as real a presence in our lives when he helps us to control our tongues as when he helps us to use them. A silence which is full of the unpretentious deeds of love has far more spirituality in it, more of the Holy Ghost, than the most religious speech unaccompanied with the ministering hand. Prophesying and the gift of tongues are for the few. They are rare gifts ; they are useful gifts. Blessed is he who by tongue or pen can move men to better lives. But the gift which our Lord speaks of when he talks about the man in prison, the stranger, the hungry, the naked, and the sick ; the gifts of which he speaks in his Sermon on the Mount, and in his other discourses upon his new commandment, — the gift of loving our enemies, letting our light shine, bearing good fruit, improving our talents, forgiving one another, suppressing revenge, and refraining from slander, — these are the common gifts which all can have for the asking ; which all, indeed, must have, or the inference will be that they have not the Spirit.

The true test of the Spirit's presence is the manifestation which he makes of himself. The man who claims to have a power, and fails to use it, will not be believed. Application, action, results, — these are the proofs of power. If you have spiritual power, we shall all find it out. You may not make

a show of it, but we shall discover it. You will find your place and fill it. The Holy Ghost does not need your position or your trade for his channel. He needs you. When he has possessed you, and filled you, and kindled the faculty by which he intends to make you felt in the world, he will set you to work, wherever you are, to win the world to Christ. He will present the Saviour to men through you, by helping you to be Christlike. You may be a humble carpenter. That makes no difference. Apply your power. Show how the Holy Spirit can work through the carpenter. Be honest; be true. Saw your boards, and drive your nails with a hand athrill with the power of the Holy Ghost. Let all the wheels of your inner life — love, hope, patience, forbearance, joy, peace, mercy — move ceaselessly on under the impulse of this power, so that their hum shall be as suggestive of energy as that of the dynamo. You and the Holy Ghost can make any calling a great one. If the Spirit divine appeared as the mighty Jehovah, the Creator of all things, when he first made the world, remember that he came in the lowly guise of a carpenter to remake it. The weak things has God chosen to confound the mighty, that no flesh should glory before him. No king by virtue of his kingship can say, "I have done this great thing." God can do just as great and greater things through the king's servant.

Joseph was greater than Pharaoh. Luther, the despised monk, was greater than the Pope. The Atlas bearers of the world have made their muscle at obscure forges. The pauper with a righteous cause is often greater than a prince with a kingdom, "that no flesh may glory."

John Brown, of Haddington, was once visited by a young man of a very excitable temperament, and was told by him that he wanted to preach the gospel. The shrewd pastor saw that the young man's zeal was greater than his knowledge, and that his conceit was greater than either, and so he advised him to stay where he was. "But," said the young man, "I want to preach, and glorify God." The old commentator replied: "My young friend, a man may glorify God making brooms. Stick to your trade, and glorify God by your life and conversation."

Then comes the thought that we are a part of "one stupendous whole." Your prophesying, and that other man's discerning, and that other's faith, are interlinked, and mutually supporting members of one body. Your work, and my work, and our brother's work go together, as the hand, the arm, and the eye, and together we can strike a vigorous blow.

This is very comforting to discouraged workers, and to those who have come to think that they have no great power spiritually. You stand in your

place and toil on, wondering why, if you really have the power of the Spirit, you do not make more impression on the world, and see more results. Men seem so busy and unresponsive, and to care so little for what you say. You put your heart into your work, and think you are doing it with Christ's approval, and yet the world does not seem to notice it. In fact, you have about concluded that the more unselfish your work is, the more men will call you a fool, or an enthusiast. You almost begin to doubt, and you say to yourself, "Does it pay, after all?" A finger plunged for an instant into the ocean, and then withdrawn, a yellow leaf kissing the granite boulder and falling to decay, a rain-drop brushing a rose petal and mingling with the earth, — each, you think, leaves about as much impression behind as you will leave when your life-work is done, and the funeral tears are shed.

Failure seems to face you. Friends drop off one by one. You are getting old, and the world is ever young; you are getting serious, and the world is gay. What is the use?

Mrs. Browning tries to comfort you a bit : —

"Though we fail indeed,
You, I, a score of such weak workers, He
Fails never. If he cannot work by us,
He will work over us. Does he want a man,
Much less a woman, think you? Every time

The star winks there, so many souls are born
Who shall work, too. Let our own be calm.
We should be ashamed to sit beneath those stars,
Impatient that we're nothing."

To my mind it is cold comfort to think that God does not want a man or a woman to work with; that he could do without us just as well,—cold as the starlight under which Mrs. Browning would have us sit in silence. I find better comfort in our text and context, "Members of one body," the less comely parts honored even more than the comely ones; something for each to do, and no thought of being left out alone, pining under the unsympathetic stars. God can work by us, and with him in us we cannot fail. Our work will last. It is as imperishable as the walls of heaven. It is a part of those walls.

Yes, he fails never, and because we work with him we cannot fail. What we do becomes a part of his glory. Our toil and sacrifice and suffering are the medium of his power, the channel of his energy. Our tears make his rainbows. I saw a rainbow last week, magnificent, full-arched, and brilliant. There it lay off in the east, expanding from the dark bosom of the storm its seven-colored petals, a gorgeous blossom of the skies called into being by the westering sun. But how many rain-drops it took to make that rainbow, falling, ever falling, in countless numbers! And how brief was the bril-

liance of each falling drop, and how many bows such a drop helped to make on its journey earthward, one for every angle of vision ! How full was that dark cloud and that falling shower of rainbows, rainbows which I could not see, which no one saw ! And how these rain-drops, after touching the earth for awhile, would in time get back again into the skies and help to make other rainbows, and so on throughout the ceaseless circle, till the sun shall set forever !

Your life, my brother, is a rain-drop reflecting the Sun that never sets. It shines out upon this beholder and that ; and when it gets below the angle of their vision, they call it ended, and others take your place in the swift passage through the prismatic space. Even you do not see your own glory, and you get discouraged towards the end. But the end is only the beginning. Are they not all ministering spirits ? Does not their work go on ? Others take their earth places, and make rainbows for earthly eyes ; but they, having fallen to the dust, have risen again a great cloud of witnesses, radiant in the upper skies, reflecting still the Sun of righteousness, showing forth his glory, a part of the rainbow which encircles the throne of the eternal.

THE END.



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2005

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