

Sunday Reading.

From the North Carolina Presbyterian.
THE POWER OF PRAYER.

The general duty of prayer, and the motives which should prompt us to its discharge, are very frequently explained and urged, both in the Scriptures, and by those who write and preach for the benefit of the Christian public; yet there is one aspect of this subject, viz: its power, that is not properly appreciated. Though all Christians admit, that it is a very great and precious privilege to be permitted to approach the throne of the heavenly grace, and spread out their wants with the confident expectation of having them supplied; yet there is often so much unbelief mixed with these prayers, and the reliance placed upon their efficacy so imperfect, that the petitioners fail to realize the benefits which might otherwise be derived from an audience with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

It becomes, however, a very grave question, what is the kind of prayer to which this great power is ascribed? The Apostle James furnishes the answer. "The fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Here we have three words, of *real, fervent, righteous*. Henry describes it as *in-sought and well wrought prayer*, and adds, "It must be a pouring out of the heart to God, and it must proceed from a faith unfeigned." It springs from a heart that overflows with love to God, and reposes with the most perfect confidence in His goodness, mercy, and fidelity.

This prayer lays hold of the promises of God, and so pleads them as to admit of no denial—it says in the language of wrestling Jacob,—"I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless." This is the nature and character of effectual prayer, whether an individual off'er it for himself, or for others.

What is the character of the man whose prayer is here said to avail much? He must be a "righteous man," not righteous in an absolute sense, because this is the idea which the Apostle attaches to the word, for he says, "Elias was a man subject to the passions as we are; that is, he did not possess absolute righteousness—but righteous in a Scriptural sense, not loving or approving any known sin. Or in the language of the Psalmist, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. Lxxvii. 18.

To approach the throne of grace acceptably and successfully, we must be found in the careful discharge of every Christian and relative duty; there must be a sincere dependence upon known infractions of God's Holy law, in a word, we must be good men and full of the Holy Ghost, or we need not expect our prayer to avail much, whether for ourselves, or for those who desire us to pray for them.

The subject to which we would invite the attention of the reader is the *power* of prayer. This is the proposition which we wish to illustrate and prove by a few examples from the word of God:

The example of Elijah. "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." Admitting there was something merciful in this prayer, still the manner in which the Apostle quotes it shows that it was intended for our encouragement. Elijah is the most respected age of the world and the Church, God has had some faithful witnesses, as in the days of corrupt and wicked Ahab, there was a holy and zealous Elijah. The fact alluded to is the language of James, is thus narrated in the Old Testament. (See 1 Kings 17. 1-6.) And Elijah the Tishbite, moreover of the inhabitants of Gilead, did unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain more than I will bring." Admitting that the fury of the enraged king, he was directed to hide himself by the brook Cherith, where he was fed by the ravens, and afterwards, to go to Zarephath, where he remained until the end of the famine.

At God's appointed time, he showed himself to Ahab, accused him of sin, destroyed his false prophets, caused rain to descend upon the earth, and reversed the land of a good as famine. (1 Kings 18.—19.)

In the history of Moses, we have several examples of the power of prayer. It is well known that he was very much beloved by all the men who were upon the earth; and hence his prayers, particularly for his enemies, were so signalized as to baffle away the anger of God.

When Pharaoh and his people were suffering under grievous afflictions which had fallen upon them, because they refused to release the captive Israelites, this hasty monarch called on Moses to intercede with God that these evils might be removed.

If the question were asked, "In what respects does Moses appear more glorious, when he is casting the rod of God and bringing plagues upon Egypt, or in interceding that they might be removed?" the spiritual Christian would find no difficulty in answering.

Kingsley submitted,

HENRY E. SHORE.

bers the reader will find one of these remarkable and effectual prayers.

And when his sister Miriam was smitten with leprosy for speaking against him, "he cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee."

These are remarkable instances of the power of intercessory prayer, and they may be profitably studied by the present race of Christians. Other examples will be given hereafter. So far the present dear reader, farewell. J. P. M.

CHERFULNESS AND CHARITY.

Cherfulness fills the soul full of harmony; it makes and publishes glorifications of God; it produces thankfulness and serves the end of charity; and, when the oil of gladness runs over, it makes bright emulsions of light, and kindles holy fire, reaching up to the clouds, and making joy round about; and, therefore since it is so innocent, and may be pious and full of holy advantage, whatsoever can innocently minister to this holy joy does not forward the work of religion and charity. And, indeed, charity itself, which is the vertical top of all religion, nothing else but a union of joys concentrated in the heart, and reflected from all the angels of our life and intercession. It is a rejoicing in God, a gladness in our neighbor's welfare, a pleasure in doing good a rejoicing with him, and without love we can have no joy at all.

PASTORAL VISITING.—There is a charm in the weekly day service of a parish minister, which has not been duly estimated, either by philanthropists or parsons. His official and recognized character furnishes him with a ready passport to every habitation; and he will soon find that a visit to the house of a parishioner is the surest way of finding access to his heart. Even the hardiest and most hopeless in vice, cannot altogether withstand this influence; and at times, in their own domestic history, there are opportunities, whether by sickness or disaster, or death, which afford a weighty advantage to the Christian kindness that is brought to bear upon them. His week day attention, and their Sabbath attendance go hand in hand. It is thus that a house-going minister wins for himself a church-going people. —Dr. Chalmers.

Agricultural.

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From the Richmond Planter.

BEST MODE OF APPLYING MANURES TO THE SOIL.

Mr. Presidents.—In obedience to the requirements of this Club, I offer as an annual contribution, a few thoughts on what may be considered the best mode of applying manures to the soil. I mean, such measures as are usually made from stable, farm pens and otherwise. A subject of paramount importance and of such practical utility to agriculturists, requires serious consideration. An abundant supply, properly applied, superseding almost any rotation of crops, being as it were the sheet anchor of the farmer's hope, a lever with which he can reinvigorate his exhausted lands, and make them equal, if not superior, in productivity to the soil. I mean, such measures as are usually made from stable, farm pens and otherwise. A subject of paramount importance and of such practical utility to agriculturists, requires serious consideration. 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