cases, the much-vaunted unity of Roman  
interpreters embracing the most opposite  
opinions. **The supplication of a righteous  
man** (i.e. of one who shews his faith by  
his works, see ch. ii. 24) **availeth much in  
its working** (i.e. worketh very effectually.  
Much doubt has arisen about the meaning  
and reference of this last term. It is  
usually taken as in A. V.,—“the effectual  
fervent prayer,”—as an epithet, setting  
forth its fervency. This interpretation however has not only, as Wiesinger confesses,  
New Test. usage against it, but can hardly  
be justified from the context, it being  
necessarily implied that the prayer of the  
righteous man is not a dead and formal  
one. Besides which, the force of the  
general sentence, “*the prayer of a righteous man availeth much,*” suffers much  
from the appending of a condition under  
which alone the sentence could be true).

**17, 18.]** *Example of this effectual  
prayer, in the case of Elijah.*

**17.]**  
**Elijah was a man of like passions with us**  
(this precedes, to obviate the objection that  
the greatness of Elijah, so far out of our  
reach, neutralizes the example for us weak  
and ordinary men. There is no contrast to  
the *just* man intended, but rather Elijah is  
an éxample of a just man), **and he prayed  
with prayer** (made it a special matter of  
prayer: not, *prayed earnestly*, as A. V.,  
and others) **that it might not rain** (this  
fact is not even hinted at in the Old Test.  
history in 1 Kings xvii. ff.; nor the following one, that he prayed for rain at the end  
of the drought: though this latter may  
perhaps be implied in 1 Kings xviii. 42 ff.),  
**and it rained not on the earth for three  
years and six months** (so also Luke iv. 25:  
and in a Rabbinical work this, “In the thirteenth year of Ahab, a famine prevailed in Samaria  
for three years and a half.”  
There is no real discrepancy here, as has  
been often assumed, with the account in  
I Kings: for as Benson has rightly observed, the words “*in the third year*” of  
1 Kings xviii. 1 by no necessity refer to  
the duration of the famine, but most naturally date back to the removal of Elijah to  
Zarephath, xvii. 8 ff.; compare the same  
“many days” in ver. 15, where indeed a  
variation is “for a full year”): **and again  
he prayed** (see above), **and the heavens  
gave rain and the earth brought forth her  
fruit** (which she is accustomed to bear).

**19, 20.]** *The importance and blessing of  
reclaiming an erring brother.* This is  
very nearly connected with the foregoing;  
the duty of mutual advice and correction,  
with that of mutual confession and prayer.

**19.]** **Brethren, if any among you be  
seduced** (literally passive; and there is no  
reason why the passive signification should  
not be kept, especially when we remember  
our Lord’s warning, “*Take heed that no  
man deceive, seduce you”*) **from the truth**  
(not merely truth practical, of moral conduct, but that truth which is the subject of  
the *word* whereby our regeneration took  
place, ch. i. 18; the doctrine of Christ,  
spiritual and practical), **and one convert**  
**him** (turn him back to the truth); {20} **know**  
(or, *let him know*, viz. the *converted man—*

for his comfort, and for the encouragement of others to do the like by this proclamation of the fact), **that he who converteth**  
(not, ‘*has converted:*’ our English present,  
when connected with a future, exactly gives  
the meaning) **a sinner from the error of  
his way** (thus is the person converted more  
generally expressed than before ; not only