



### The Family Circle.

#### PRAYER.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour,  
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make.  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,  
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!  
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower:  
We rise, and all the distant and the near  
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear:  
We kneel how weak! we rise how full of power!  
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,  
Or others, that we are not always strong.  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?

—Archbishop Trench.

#### TELL HIM.

BY JAMES WILLIAM KIMBALL.

Have you given yourself to God?  
"Yes, I have, again and again; but it don't seem to make any difference. I don't see why it need be so difficult to become a Christian."

But, my dear friend, who makes it so difficult? It certainly is not God, for Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come; buy wine and milk without money and without price." "And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." It is you that have made it difficult, for while he has been calling, you have been refusing, while He stretched out His hand, you disregarded, compelling your Lord to say, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." You have listened to the voice of worldly pleasure, and have yielded yourself to the persuasion that there could be no higher pleasure than that which comes to you through the senses. This you have persisted in doing, until sensuous pleasure alone seems to you real. This is what makes it difficult to become a Christian. A Christian is one who realizes Christ, who not only finds Christ real, but finds him to be the only reality. Others disappoint; He alone satisfies.

"Oh, that I could find him!"  
"Then shall ye seek and find me, when ye search for me with all your heart." It is His own declaration, and true beyond all peradventure. If you fail to find Him, you may know assuredly it is because you do not search for Him with all your heart.

"I'm sure I have tried, but my mind works slowly."

Take then a hint from Solomon: "If the iron be blunt, then must he put to more strength," that is, redouble your diligence; strive the more earnestly. Realize Jesus you must, and realize Him you will, if you set your heart and mind with inexorable determination to do so.

"But is it not written that 'faith is the gift of God?'"

It is, indeed, hence your encouragement to ask, to seek and search. It will certainly be given to him who cares enough for it thus to seek and search. "The gift of God is eternal life," and "this is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This is real life, the only life that does not mock you. In Him is fulness of life.

"Well, if he wishes me to have it, why does he not give it to me? I certainly have asked, and asked, and asked again, with all the earnestness I am capable of."

You have not yet believed in His willingness—His more than willingness—to give; His eagerness to give more than you have asked or thought. Indeed, I may well question if you have in fact asked Him at all. It is written, He that cometh to God must believe that He is. Have you in fact

realized Jesus as real, present, listening to you?

"No, that is just my trouble, that I cannot realize Him, I seem to be speaking only into the air."

Exactly, so I supposed. You must then realize Him.

"I have already told you that is just what I cannot do."

Ah! you have found out that, found that without His enabling power you can accomplish nothing. It is a most important discovery. Now ask Him to realize Himself to you. Tell him how much you wish it. Tell him of your willingness to make any sacrifice that may be needed to secure it. Convince him that you are both honest and in earnest. Say to yourself, Jesus is here: He knows every thought, every feeling, as well as every word I speak. Lord, show thyself to me. I do love Thee, I do keep Thy words, Lord, manifest Thyself to me, and come with the Father and make Thine abode with me, according to Thy word; John 14: 21, 23. Only show Him that you mean it, and He is faithful, He cannot deny Himself; that is, He cannot fail of His word.

"But how can I say that I love Him and keep His words, when that is just what I do not do?"

If that is so, then tell Him that you neither love Him nor keep His words.

"But that is shocking! How could I dare to say that?"

I don't see how you can. But you want to be saved, do you not?"

"Certainly I do."

Then say that; for "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." When He finds you both true in what you say and thoroughly in earnest, He will bring home to you the blessing in Psalm 119: 2: "Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart."—*The Watchman.*

#### HAVE YOU LOST GOD?

"Ruined! Yes, I have lost everything! If I were younger, I might talk of beginning life over again, but it is too late for that and I see nothing but starvation staring us in the face."

Mrs. Carleton looked in a puzzled, dazed way at her husband, when he uttered these words. He had been talking for some little time of ruin and starvation, but she could not understand them as having any connection with herself. There were plenty of people who lost money and had to give up their carriages or go away for a year; she thought she would prefer giving up her carriage, and she had told him so, but he had said such queer things.

"Do you mean!" she asked, "that we must give up some of the servants, too?"

"I mean," he repeated, "that we must give up everything; all is gone—house, furniture and all. Where we are to find enough to keep soul and body together I do not know!"

"I—it cannot be so bad as that!" said his wife, with a look of terror in her face.

"But it is, I tell you, I have lost everything. Do you not understand? And now go—I would rather be alone."

Mechanically Mrs. Carleton rose and left the room. There was no word of sympathy exchanged between husband and wife, and yet—the world considered them a happy couple. She governed a well regulated house, and he supplied her with everything necessary to maintain a good position in society. Life had gone very smoothly with them so far, and Mrs. Carleton had never dreamed it could go otherwise. As long as she could remember, she had had everything she wanted, and now—it must be a horrible dream from which she would soon awake.

But Henry Carleton knew it was no dream. He realized to the fullest extent, the situation in which he was, and he realized, too, that he could expect no help from his wife—that everything must be planned and carried out by himself. He bowed his head when left alone, and groaned aloud. A gentle touch caused him to start up suddenly, only to see before him his little niece, orphaned and taken into his home only a few weeks before. Unknown to him she had witnessed the interview with his wife.

"Uncle," she said, as she looked into his face with a questioning, anxious look on her own, "have you lost God? Has he gone?"

Henry Carleton gazed curiously into the child's face as his memory went back with a

flash to the time he had gone out into the world, and his mother, who had died soon after, had urged him to give his heart to One who would guide him in paths of truth and uprightness, and would be a strong Arm to lean on, and a Comforter in time of trouble. Had he done so? No. What need had he had of a God? And now—was there comfort anywhere?

"Bessie," he said, in a gentler voice than the one he had used to his wife. "what do you know about God?"

"Oh, uncle, I know how good he is!"

"Do you think he has been good to you in taking from you your father and mother?"

"God is always good, uncle, and they are so happy."

"H'm! Well, perhaps so, but you—what will become of you now? Didn't you hear me say I did not know where I could get enough to provide the necessaries of life for my own family?"

"Uncle, God will take care of me and of us all, if we only ask him and give him our hearts."

"How do you know that he will?"

"Because he says he will, and he always keeps his promises."

He had been inclined to be a scoffer at religion lately, but the simple trust of this little child struck him as nothing had ever done before. For a moment there was a wild conflict of feeling going on, and it was a moment that was to decide his destiny for time and for eternity. The evil in his nature struggled hard for the mastery, but the memory of his mother and the look on the childish face upturned to his, caused him to feel an unaccountable desire for something above and beyond what he had ever experienced before.

"Bessie," he asked eagerly, "has he made any promises that would suit me now, in my trouble? Is there anything that would make it easier, you know!—anything to make me feel as you did when he took everything from you?"

"Yes, uncle, the Bible is full of God's love and of his care for us all, will you let me show you?"

"Yes."

It was a well worn Bible she brought, one that had been her mother's, and one that he recognized as having been his mother's, and it was a strange sight—the two, one a man of the world, the other, a child of God, intently examining its pages, and noting carefully those portions of Scripture that had been marked by loving hands as having afforded comfort and consolation in time of trouble. Truly, though dead, they yet spake. And were their voices heard? Yes. Earthly pleasures had been tried and proved hollow and false, friends had flown, and all was dark until a little child had led the way to the feet of "One who sticketh closer than a brother."

Friend, are you now trying the world and its pleasures? Are you rejecting Christ? If so, the time will come when your burdens will be greater than you can bear. Oh stop—you are daily and hourly adding to those burdens—and listen to the voice of One who says to all, no matter how sin-stained or vile, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—*Church and Home.*

#### WHITTLING.

A boy must have a knife, and he must whittle. No energy of man or boy should be wasted; so that it becomes all directors and guardians of youth to turn the whittling propensity to good account. Tell the boy what to whittle, how to whittle—or he will surely be aimlessly whittling a shingle, hacking the furniture, or carving his name on fences and benches.

The jack-knife is a simple tool, but one with which some excellent work may be done. By no means despicable wood carving may be done with it, and it may be pressed into service for the manufacture of numerous knick-knacks worthy of thought, in these days when boys are racking their brains to know what they can make for Christmas gifts. Let me give some suggestions as to whittling.

In the first place, have a good jack-knife. Not one of the flimsy little penknives, with blades not even big enough to play numble-the-peg with; but a right down substantial knife, with one big and one little blade. A smooth handle with rounded ends should be chosen because it will fit the hand better,

and will not wear out the pockets. Keep the knife always sharp—first by having it well ground, and afterwards by frequent application to a moderately rough oil-stone. Don't by any means get one of those complicated and useless knives that combine in one handle a gimlet, cork-screw, file, saw, and a score more of useless but curious adaptations.

Having the knife, boys, don't whittle aimlessly. You can learn to make long, firm, straight cuts just as well in making an arrow as in shaving up a shingle. I know there is something extremely fascinating in the wisp of a cut through a cedar or pine shingle, and the odor of the newly cut wood is something simply delicious. But these charms need not be absent when you are making something besides shavings.

Well, what shall I make? the boy asks, in a perfect fever to be at work. Let me suggest a few articles. Paper cutters, in the shape of daggers, of hard wood, and with handles carved in some simple design. Finish them smoothly in every part, rub them down with painters' oil till they are polished, and you could hardly have anything better to give to father or mother for Christmas. Then for the little brother there is nothing better to make than a bow and arrows. A good stick of ash is easily fashioned into a bow, and an arrow of pine with a heavy head and light body is easily made. Or a cross-bow, with stock of black walnut and bow of ash, with a trigger of walnut and a good closely-twisted string to draw it with, is an implement which may be used to train the eye in shooting at a mark. Or, if you want to make a Christmas gift to some older male friend, go out into the woods and find long shoots of hickory or holly; cut them with the big root knots left on, trim off the branches smoothly, and, taking advantage of the natural lines of the root, make a handle by carving it into a more perfect resemblance of the grotesque head it is almost sure to look like in the rough. You have only then to hang it up to season, rub it down and varnish it, add a ferule, and you have a cane that will be prized far more than any one you could buy in the shops. Or take one of those curious Swiss toys, or long-nosed wooden nut-crackers—they, too are whittled by boys in the Swiss mountains—and see how closely you can copy it in soft cedar or pine. You won't do it, perhaps, as well as your model, but you'll be surprised how quaint and funny your copy will be when it is done, and how handsome it will be, too, when you've filled the grain with oil and rubbed smooth the puffy cheeks and long crooked nose. Then there are boats to be made; a row-boat for Johnny, all complete, with dainty oars and seats; or a sail boat, rigged, for Sammy, with his monogram painted on the sail. The boys can try them in the bath tub, and then lay them away to have fun with next summer.

Or you can take a picture of a Venetian gondola, and see how closely you can make a miniature gondola by that guide. Make even the little cabin, and if you give the graceful craft to Sue or Polly, she can give her tiniest doll a "boat ride" in the tiny craft upon the surging waters of the wash-bowl. Or if you have a fancy, my boy, to make something of more importance than a toy boat, get a piece of half-inch oak stuff, and see what you can do towards making a weather-cock. One of the most astonishingly wide-awake roosters that I ever saw pictured out was done in wood by a boy of twelve. It told the way of the wind capitally, and sat proudly on the barn gable, saluting every fresh breeze with a new "cock-a-doodle-doo."

Something, and quite a good deal, may be done with the jack-knife in the way of wood-carving. A simple flat pattern on a panel of soft wood may be traced out with considerable nicety by a clever boy. Don't have the pattern too elaborate, let it be conventionalized (look that up in the dictionary), and begin by cutting the outline in a little trough-like groove, say a sixteenth of an inch in depth. It is a knack easily acquired to cut smoothly and of even depth, and no good results can be had until it is acquired. Then having the pattern all outlined—a spray of oak leaves, or a quaint dragon or other grotesque monster from some Japanese design—and a groove cut all round it, you have only to remove the wood all round the pattern, and you have a carving in low relief. Perhaps you have left your ground a little irregular—smooth it all you can—and then with a sharpened nail make little indentations all over it. Rub some color-