

It was the afternoon of the women's quarterly missionary meeting in the Shadyville Baptist church. Mrs. Gray, the minister's wife, came to the vestry with a sad heart. She knew too well the character of these gatherings. A few ladies came together in a listless, apathetic way, a few lifeless prayers were offered, a little business disposed of; and the ladies went to their homes wondering why there wasn't more interest in missions. Mrs. Tucker wasn't in the habit of attending the missionary meeting; so when she came into one this afternoon, the ladies present looked at each other in surprise. Mrs. Gray read the psalm and offered prayer, and then came the usual dead silence.

Presently Mrs. Tucker rose to her feet, and in a voice shaken with emotion said:

"I s'pose you're all astonished to see me here, but the truth of the matter is, I've got something to say to you which can't half be told in words, neither. You all know my little Sallie has been sick, but I don't s'pose none of you know what that sickness has been to me. You see the children wanted her to go to the mission band, but I was tough and cranky, and dead set ag'in' anything of the kind, an' told her in the crossest way she couldn't go. She'd heard somethin' about giving to Jesus, and laid out her best doll and book; an' I laughed at it, an' told her the Lord didn't want her trash. Well, she took sick, an' got sicker an' sicker, till my heart stood still with the fear o' losing her. She was out of her head, you know, and every time I come near the bed she'd start right up an' say: 'Oh, can't I give him anything? Don't he want my dolly? O mother, mother, can't I go?' till I just thought my heart would break in two. Everywhere I looked I could see her eyes with such a beseechin' look in 'em, and hear her voice callin', 'Mother, mother, can't I give him *anything*?' till at last I went down on my knees all broke up like, and I sez: 'Lord, I'm a poor, ungrateful sinner, and I've been a withholding from you all these years, but if there's anythin' I can give you, won't you please take it? Even my little girl and everything I've got I just lay down.' Well, my sisters, I cried an' cried as I hain't for years; and it wasn't all for sorrow, neither; ther' was a great, deep joy in it all. And I come here to-day to tell you that I just give myself and all I've got to the Lord's work. I'm fairly converted to missions, and if the Lord will only take the poor, miserable offerin' I've got to give, and use me roughshod in his work, I'd really be only too thankful. Why, my sisters, I'm the happiest woman on earth, and it's all owin' to the blessed child and the children's band."

With one accord the ladies present sank upon their knees, while from awakened tender hearts went up earnest vows of consecration. And Mrs. Gray wended her way homeward with lightened, grateful heart, saying softly to herself, "And a little child shall lead them."—*Helen E. Crosby, in Home Missionary Echo.*

DR. HODGE'S PRAYER.

"As far back as I can remember," said a wise and good man, "I had the habit of thanking God for everything I received, and of asking him for everything I wanted."

"If I lost a book, or any of my playthings, I prayed that I might find it. I prayed walking along the streets, in school or out of school, whether playing or studying. I did this because it seemed natural to do so. I thought of God as being everywhere present, full of kindness and love, who would not be offended if children talked to Him."

That man was Dr. Charles Hodge, the distinguished schoar and preacher. How happy all children would be if they were to talk with God as to their father, which he did as a child, and had also the habit of thanking God!

Too often when our prayers are answered we forget to give God thanks.

The child who talks with God will not be likely to use bad words at any time. His speech and his heart will be sanctified by communing with one who is perfectly pure and loving, so that only words which are good and pleasant will flow from his lips.—*Selected, in the Missionary Monthly.*

SOUTH AFRICA'S PESTS.

South Africa imports hides, wool and mohair, and the ranchmen would revel in riches were it not for the various pests that decimate his flocks and herds. The most deadly one is the rinderpest, a cattle plague, which in the past ten years has been slowly creeping from Central Africa southward, leaving a wake of whitened bones. In traveling through Natal I saw fifty oxen lying dead about a spring, where they had tumbled one over the other, so suddenly had the disease attacked them. Dr. Koch and other eminent specialists tried in vain to stop the plague. The country is now recovering from it slowly.

Another pest is the tsetse fly, an insect resembling our common housefly, but three times as large. Its bite will kill a horse, cow, or any other domestic animal in about ten days, but strange to say, does not affect a wild animal or a human being. A less dangerous, but more troublesome pest is the white ant, which is about one quarter of an inch long and ubiquitous in many parts of the country. They live under the ground and can only be routed by the killing of the queen, which sometimes reaches one inch in length. This insect is particularly harassing in Rhodesia. At Buluwayo my traveling companion inadvertently left his boots on the floor after turning in at night, and he arose next morning to find the uppers carefully separated from the soles. "Lucky, you didn't leave your clothes on the floor," was the hotel-keeper's only consolation. These ants will eat