

Fourth Department.

From the Christian Intelligencer.

BE KIND UNTO THY MOTHER.

What would I give to call my mother back for one day, to ask her pardon, upon my knees, for all those acts by which I gave her gentle spirit pain!—CHARLES LAMIN

Be kind unto thy mother,
Nor from thy lips let sound
A word of harsh or angry tone,
That might her feelings wound;
She bore for thee a thousand pains,
For thee she jeopardized
Her valued health and precious life—
Gifts that are highly prized.

Her breast was once the fountain
At which thou lovedst to lay,
And long and plaintive were thy cries
When from it forced away.
Her love for thee was strong as death,
For when disease had laid
Its sickening and infectious hand,
And others were afraid,

To enter near thy chamber
Or touch thy fevered cheek,
Then near thee was thy mother—
'Twas bliss to hear her speak,
She sat beside thy little bed,
And watched thy heaving breast,
While the long hours of night sped on
Without her seeking rest.

Her kind, soft hand has touched thy pulse,
Has gently pressed thy brow;
Her anxious heart has rent with care
As sickness brought thee low.
Then agonizing long in prayer
For thee, her soul has poured
Its supplications to her God
That thou might be restored.

Her prayer was heard, and thou hast lived
To see fair manhood gained,
While she, throughout thy childhood's years,
Thy comfort has maintained.
And canst thou now, ere yet the dawn
Has left thy youthful cheek,
Turn from thy mother's gentle voice,
And elsewhere counsel seek?

Oh, canst thou wound her tender heart
Fores from that heart the sigh,
Or look indifferent on the tears
That moist her loving eye?
Or canst thou turn away thy face,
Close from her words thine ears,
And laugh in cold derision
As she speaks a mother's fears?

Then turn thee not in angry mood,
Wrest not the hand she holds,
For thy best interests are enwrapped
Within her heart's deep folds.
Remember! oh, remember!
The time may not far be
When that dear anxious mother
You may no longer see;
When low beneath the heavy sod
Her precious form is laid.
How sad will be remembered words
Once passionately said!

M. W. T.

THE NEW SLED.—'Mother, here is my sled,' said a rosy-cheeked little fellow, tugging his sled into the house in order to show it to his mother. 'and the first thing it shall do is to go on an errand for you. What do you want me to fetch home from the store? And the next thing it shall do, shall be to carry Alice to ride. She's a little girl, and would like a ride on my new sled. I dare say. Would it not please her dearly, mother? After that I'll go on the hill, and slide with the boys.'

This is one of the best order of exercises for a new sled that I ever heard of, and I wish every boy to mark it. First and foremost was James's sled to be used to help his mother, then to give delight to his little sister, and not until lastly did he mean to use it for his own special amusement. I venture to say, most boys would have begun with themselves first, would they not? Mother and sister would have come last, or not at all, or had perhaps only a grudging share in the new sled; as for instance, when you came home from riding down hill, your mother should ask you to go on an errand for her, and you would have said 'how tired you were,' or asked 'if to-morrow would do,' and wished 'some body else would go errands.' Or if your sister had said, 'O take me a little ride on your new sled,' you might have roughly answered, 'It's my sled; I shan't take girls on it,' or some unkind answer like this, which boys are too apt to make.

But do you think this would have been the best way to enjoy your sled? No, I think not. James had learned the true secret of taking the greatest amount

of enjoyment with his, and that was not by beginning with himself first. There is a great sale of sleds about this time, and I hope every boy who reads this will try James' way of enjoying his.

THE THREE LITTLE GIRLS' PLANS.—Three little girls were sitting on the door-step, talking about what they meant to do. And as I always feel an interest in hearing the plans of children, I marked what they were saying.

'I,' said one, 'mean to tease my father to carry me to Halifax to see all the pretty things. I mean to go. I will go.'

'Well, I mean to get into the high school; that is what I want most of any thing, and I'm ready to study for it,' said another. It was a fine purpose, I thought, and there is no doubt that the child will succeed.

'I know what I am going to do,' said the third and the smallest, throwing back her curls with the air of a queen; 'next year I am going to get over so many subscribers for the Church Times. I love to read about the good children in it, and I want to be like them.'

The editor of the paper will thank her for that, I feel very sure. It is certainly a testimony to the value of good company. Well, my child, do not wait until next year, but go directly about it. Begin now. Let every child who reads the paper, and feels its value, get at least one new subscriber for the next year. You may get as many as you can, but at least get one. It will be a good work, a blessed little labor of love. You cannot do better than to extend good reading. I would ask every reader to follow up this little girl's plan. For myself, I mean to, and I thank her for it: and it makes true what is frequently said, that we learn much from the children. And now let us labor with them: two hundred and fifty thousand workers shall we be, and see what we can accomplish.

BE FIRM.—Let every Christian boy, or man, always remember that there is nothing which so commands respect and commends the truth, as a firm standing up to his principles. Be true to them. Never flinch. Show your colors: and thus let every body know that as for you, you are on the side of God and the Bible.

LITTLE WILLIE.—Little Willie was a gentle fair-haired boy, and a child of Christian parents, though born in a heathen land. He had been taught with his earliest lisps to repeat nightly, on retiring to rest, that beautiful child's prayer,

'Now I lay me down to sleep.'

When he was a little more than three years old God called him away from earth, but the closing scene of his life was beautiful. As the shadows of death gathered round him, he supposed it the darkness of night, and clasping his tiny hands he commenced,

'Now I lay me down to sleep,

I pray the Lord my soul to keep;

If I should die'

and here his lip faltered, his pulse ceased, and his spirit returned to the God who gave it.

Selections.

DO YOU PRAY.—David did. His circumstances were indeed unfavourable. A crown was upon his head. The cares of a kingdom pressed him. He might have said—'I have no time.' But he prayed. He prayed much. It was one of his most influential habits. What proofs and illustrations abound in those wonderful compositions, the Psalms. How touching, earnest, sublime often, were his cries unto God. How have his spiritual exercises been an incitement and pattern of devotion in every succeeding age!

Daniel did. He was indeed a statesman and courtier. He lived in the midst of idolaters. To them his religion was offensive. The king bade him not to pray unto Jehovah. If he did it was at mortal peril. The great men of Babylon conspired to make this very thing the means of his ruin. Still he prayed. He did it, not ostentatiously, but without concealment. His religious principle was stronger than his fear of men.—'Three times a day he kneeled and prayed and gave thanks before his God as aforetime.'

Paul did. It was the first pulse and expression of his new life in Christ. 'Behold he prayeth!' said the Spirit. The fact was the surpassing but conclusive proof of his spiritual change and transition. From being Saul the persecutor, it was thus shown, he had become Paul the saint. However, after that event, was his life one of prayer, as well as heroic labor—of prayer for himself—for his countrymen, for the Gentile world—for the blood-brought church. Holier, in-

tensor, sublimer, aspirations probably never ascended from a soul this side of heaven.

Jesus Christ did. It is a most impressive truth. It ought to be pondered by all who do not pray. The Saviour was perfect. He was divine. He sustained no such relation of dependence as we sustain. He had no sins to be forgiven. There were in him no lusts to be restrained and purified. He was subject to no temptations he could not resist. He was assailed by no enemies he could not conquer. He had life in himself. He had creative power. He had infinite merit. But he prayed. He prayed in earnest; and with his disciples.

'Cold mountains and the midnight air,

Witnessed the fervor of his prayer.'

Yes—David, Daniel, Paul, Jesus Christ, all prayed. They were men of prayer. Do you pray?—Presb. of the West.

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.—The number and antiquity of our manuscripts of the New Testament is an argument for the authenticity of its sacred contents.

The greater part of the apocryphal books are either entirely lost, or are preserved by a single manuscript. Our most authentic and most admired classics, as Herodotus, are known only from ten or fifteen manuscripts; many are come down to us, after lying hid for ages, in one manuscript only. Now the manuscripts of our sacred books abound in every ancient library in every part of Christendom. They amount in the whole to several thousands. About five hundred have been actually examined, and compared; collated, with extraordinary care. Many of them run up to the eighth, seventh, sixth, fifth, and fourth centuries; the Codex Bezae, found in the monastery of Irenaeus, at Lyons in France, and presented by the former, whose name it bears, to the University of Cambridge, is supposed by Dr. Kipling, the editor of the facsimile of it, to be of the second century. The Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Vaticanus are supposed to be of the fourth. Now these manuscripts push back our proof to the age, next but one or two, to the when the last of the apostles died, and join on with the manuscripts compared by Jerome and Eusebius, and (A. D. 315—420,) and thus bring us up, as it were, to the very times of the promulgation of the Gospel. The prodigious number of these manuscripts, the distant countries whence they were collected, and the identity of their contents with the quotations in the Fathers of different ages, place the New Testament incomparably above all other ancient works in point of evidence of authenticity. Let any one compare the gospels and epistles as extant in our actual manuscripts with the passages cited in Jerome, Eusebius, Tertullian, Irenaeus, who had the very originals before them, or the immediate transcripts from those originals, and he will find almost the whole of our present canon.*

And this leads me to produce a noble passage from Tertullian, who was born about fifty or sixty years after the death of St. John. In the thirty-sixth chapter of his work against heresies, he says:—'Come on thou who wilt exercise thy curiosity more profitably in the business of thy salvation, run through the apostolical churches, in which the very chairs of the apostles still preside, in which their authentic' (see render it, original) 'letters are recited, sounded forth the voice, and representing the countenance of each. Is Achaia near you? you have Corinth! If you are not far from Macedonia, you have Thessalonica. If you are near to Italy, you have Rome, from whence also our assertions will be readily confirmed.' What a striking appeal is this to the actual originals of the New Testament books, perhaps to the very autographs of the divine writers—or if the word 'authentic,' means only, well attested—yet to the undoubted transcripts of the sacred epistles! When we connect this with the fine expression that 'the very chairs of the apostles still preside,' as it were, 'in their respective churches,' and that their epistles when recited, 'sounded forth the voice, and represented the countenance of each apostle,' and when we remember that those churches are appealed to, and those only, to which the sacred letters were addressed, and that the inquirer is sent by Tertullian (in the second century, be it noted) to examine the books for himself: I say, when we consider all this, and associate it in our minds with the critical revision of ancient manuscripts made by Eusebius and Jerome in the fourth and fifth centuries, and our Codex Bezae, Codex Alexandrinus, and Vaticanus, probably of the

* This proves that the sacred books have come down to us uncorrupted. The various readings in different manuscripts do not affect a single doctrine or precept of the Christian revelation.