

WHAT CAN IDOLS DO?

A missionary in India tells the following story of a little boy who, in a mission school, had been taught about the one God, and about Jesus:

"One day this boy, who lived in a house with a heathen, said to him, 'There is only one God, the one who made the earth and sky and everything. He gives us the rain and the sunshine; he knows everything we do; he can save us or kill us. But these images you pray to are only lumps of baked clay. They can't see nor hear; how can they do any good, or save you from any trouble?'

"The heathen paid no attention to him, but soon afterwards he went on a journey. While he was gone, the little boy took a stick and broke all the images except the largest, into the hands of which he put the stick.

"When the man returned, he was very angry at what had happened, and exclaimed:

"'Who has done this?'

"'Perhaps the big idol has been beating his little brothers,' said the boy.

"'Nonsense!' said the man, 'don't talk such stuff as that! Do you think I am a fool? You know as well as I do that the thing cannot raise his hand. It was you, you little rascal! it was you! To pay you for your wickedness I will beat you to death with the same stick, and seizing the stick, he went towards him.

"But," said the boy quickly, 'how can you worship a god like that? Do you suppose if he can't take care of himself and the other idols, he can take care of you and the world—let alone making you?'

"The heathen stopped to think, for this was a new idea. The more he thought the more senseless the idol seemed. After a while he broke his idol, and went and kneeled down to pray to the true God, and called him 'My Father.'"

THE MEMORY OF A MOTHER.

Blessed is the memory of a good mother. It floats to us now like the beautiful perfume of some woodland blossom. The music of other voices may be lost, but the entrancing memory of hers will echo in our souls forever. Other faces will fade away and be forgotten, but hers will shine on until the light from heaven's portals shall glorify our own. When in the fitful pauses of our busy life our feet wander back to the old homestead, crossing

the well-worn threshold we stand once more in the low, quaint room so hallowed by her presence, how the feeling of childish innocence and dependence comes over us as we kneel down in the evening hour just where we long years ago knelt at mother's knee, lisping "Our Father." How many times when the tempter lures us on, the memory of those sacred hours, that mother's words, her faith and prayers, saved us from plunging into the abyss of sin. Years have piled great drifts between her and us, but they have not hidden from our sight the glory of her pure, unselfish love.

The servant of Christ should be like the engineer shut up in the vessel with his engine. *He sees nothing of the course; he is not the judge of that.* He does not know whither the forces he sets in motion will carry him. He slows or stops or quickens his engine, just as bidden. The pilot looks after the course. Christ is our pilot. He knows where he wants us to go, and our whole duty is to do what he bids.

The following event took place in a country church. The church members had largely moved away. Those who were left were discouraged, and talked of closing the church and dismissing the pastor. A real estate agent in another town, who was not noted for piety, sent ten dollars to the deacon, saying, "Go ahead. Call on me. I never could sell another farm in your town if the old stone church is closed."

Mr. Sam Jones is complimentary, at least he is willing to repeat a compliment, which we fear is somewhat strained. He was preaching lately in a Methodist church and related the following:—"A lawyer said to me, 'When I've got a strong case, I want a jury of Presbyterians. The Shorter Catechism, swallowed in their youth, makes them do right.' What do you Methodists swallow in your youth?"

There are many people who have their ideal circumstances in which, if the ideal could be realized, they fancy they would live very noble and beautiful Christian lives. They forget, however, that their mission in life for the present at least is to live noble and beautiful Christian lives in the actual circumstances in which God has placed them.

Oh, what must Christ be in himself when he sweetens heaven, sweetens scriptures, sweetens ordinances, sweetens earth and even sweetens trials.