

## CHURCH PRAYER MEETING.

## What Shall Lift Me?

This is a question by our Lord from the gibes in the street about Himself. It was thus men spoke of Him derisively—a friend of publicans and sinners. But frequently a gibe is the exact truth. Precisely what our Lord was—a friend of publicans and sinners; and that He was, meant to them immensities of moral value—means this also to ourselves.

First—Think of the sort of Friend our Lord Jesus Christ is.—He is the Friend *supremely worthy*. Robert Browning in a letter published since his death tell how Charles Lamb was questioning among some of his friends as to how he and they would feel if the greatest of the dead were to appear suddenly among them. On the final suggestion, "And if Christ entered this room?" he changed his manner at once, and stuttered out, as his won't was when moved, "You see, if Shakespeare entered, we should all rise; if He appeared, we must kneel."

"A pattern of all righteousness" (Lord Bacon). "In every other existence but that of Christ, how many imperfections! Where is the character which has not yielded, vanquished by obstacles? Where is the individual who has never been governed by circumstances or places, who has never succumbed to the influences of the times, who has never compounded with any customs or passions? From the first day to the last Christ is the same, always the same—majestic and simple, infinitely firm and infinitely gentle." (Napoleon). "Through the fair gloss of his manhood we perceive the rich bloom of His Divinity. If he is not now without an assailant, at least He is without a rival. If He be not the Sun of Righteousness, the Friend that gives His life for His friends, and that sticketh closer than a brother, the unfailing Consoler, the constant Guide, the everlasting Priest and King, at least as all must confess, there is no other to come into His room." (Gladstone). "I bow before Christ as the Divine manifestation of the highest principle of morality" (Goethe). "Nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life" (John Stuart Mill). "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed" (Renan).

Our understanding of the love and help of Christ is measured largely by our sense of the need of them. They who are in the severest straits and who turn to Him comprehend best the height and the depth, the power and the tenderness of His sympathy. And those who enter most fully into fellowship with Him, and learn most richly what it means, are they who suffer from the same causes which made him a sufferer. They whose longing, loving labours for the spiritual good of others have been met with indifference or even contumely, whose prayers seem to have been unheard, and whose lives seem to have been in vain—these usually have their reward in a conscious and precious fellowship with Jesus which no disappointment can rob of its sweetness.

We can only save others by being like Christ. We can only be like Him by bearing suffering as He bore it and thus becoming one with Him in the most heart-searching of all human experiences. But if we thus enter into fellowship with Him our reward is great. We become "children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him."

He is a Friend who yields Himself for you in sacrifice, to the last limit. For your weal he held Himself back from nothing.

He is a Friend who brings out the best in one. Study the transforming and eliciting influence of Jesus upon John, Peter, Thomas, etc.

He is a Friend whom it is not difficult to get

acquainted with. His heart is the open and easy sanctuary for any one.

He is the Friend whose death cannot divide you from Him. For your sake He dies, indeed, but for your sake also He triumphs over death in the resurrection; and reappearing on the other side of death, declares, "Lo, I am with you always."

Second—Come back now to our Scripture—Friend of publicans and sinners. You may not be sinners in their sort and sense, but you are a sinner in some sort and sense. How much you need uplifting! Enter into personal friendship, then, with this Jesus Christ.

Him that cometh to Me, said Christ. Enter, then into the closest personal relation with Him. Christ shall lift you.

## Christian Endeavour.

## Daily Readings.

First Day.—Two prayers. Luke 18: 9-14.

Second Day.—Earnest asking. Luke 11: 5-13.

Third Day.—Regular prayer. Ps. 55: 16-23.

Fourth Day.—Praying together. Acts 4: 21-33.

Fifth Day.—Praying in love. Mark 11: 20-26.

Sixth Day.—"Not as I will." Matt. 26: 39-44.

Seventh Day.—Why should we pray? Matt. 6: 5-15.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, APRIL 1.—"How and why should we pray?" Matt. vi: 5-15. I know of few subjects of so great importance to Christians as this subject of prayer. That which concerns a Christian's communion with God, concerns his life, and its source of peace and power; and such is prayer, for it is like a pipe that conducts the water from some neighboring mountain spring to the thirsty town below; the pipe does not make the water flow, it merely directs it where it may be of use; so with our prayers, they but direct God's ever flowing blessings in specific channels and toward special objects. To prevail in prayer is the wish of every Christian, and yet there are, comparatively, but few who enjoy the constant assurance that they have what they ask. Now this assurance is not the privilege of a favored few, it is the right of all believers. Let us then for a moment consider how it may be attained.

1. To prevail in prayer is to pray with the knowledge that what we ask is in accordance with the will of God, (1 Jno. v. 14.) and we may know this, says the Rev. Andrew Murray in his book, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, "Through God's holy word taken up and kept in the heart, the life, the will; and through God's Holy Spirit, accepted in His indwelling and leading." Ponder these words, they are rich in truth.

2. To prevail in prayer is to pray in the belief and confidence that we already have what we ask for, (Matt. xi. 24-1. Jno. v. 15.) This is the natural result of praying in accord with His will, the faith that will remove mountains and overcome all difficulties. Reference passages:—Psa. xxxiv. 15, 17, xxxvii. 4, 5, lxx. 2, cxlv. 18, 19, Ecc. v. 2, Isa. lxx. 24, Jer. xxxiii. 3, Matt. vii. 7-10, xviii. 19, 20, xxi. 22, Mark, xi. 24, Luke, xviii. 1, Jno. iv. 24, xiv. 13, 14, xv. 7, 16, xvi. 23, 24, Rom. viii. 26, Eph. iii. 20, vi. 18, Phil. iv. 6, Heb. xi. 6, Jas. i. 5-7, iv. 2, 3.

## The Cleveland Convention.

It is about time to be thinking about the coming Christian Endeavour International Convention which will be held in Cleveland, O., July 11-15. Up to date ten thousand applications have been received from those desiring accommodation, and plans are being made for at least fifteen thousand more. An interesting feature of the convention will be the denominational rallies, which proved so helpful at Montreal. We hope soon to announce the name of the gentleman who will lead the Canadian Presbyterian rally. We remind missionary committees of the roll of honour on which the names of all societies contributing at least ten dollars to missions will appear. Norman E. Hills, 372 Sibley Street Cleveland Ohio, is the person to address regarding accommodation, etc.