

a spacious dining room, when his temporary host said:

'That was merely a form of speech, not to be taken seriously.'

'I am sorry,' said the other, 'for it dissipates that delightful vision of freemasonry in Him which your words conjured up before me.'

At this point a youth bounded into the room.

'O, father!' he said, 'I did not know any one was here. But I can't manage these questions. I wish you would write and say you do not wish me to go in for the Scripture examination. You can, you know—and what is the good of it?'

The father looked half-humorously toward the stranger. 'This sort of thing is more in your line than in mine,' he said. 'Could you give my son an opinion in the matter?'

'No,' said the other, 'I do not think an opinion would do much good; but perhaps I could help you with the questions,' he addressed the young student, 'while I am partaking of this generous shelter.'

The boy looked shy; then he said, in a manly way: 'Well, I wish you would, please. I don't like funking a thing that nearly all the others manage to do.'

The two so suddenly brought together, set to work. Soon the boy was deep in the subject and then he said: 'Why, this opens up no end of possibilities! Why, I am not going to be content with just knowing the answers to these questions. I must master the whole surroundings.'

His father looked pleased. He thanked the stranger, and said, 'How strange this all seems! Two hours ago I had never seen you; an accident causes us to meet and here you are coaching my son! You lay me under great obligation, and if I can serve you in any way—'

'You shall do so,' said the stranger, 'but remember I am more than happy to do this, for God's sake.'

'Ah, you have the best of me there!' was the reply.

After a mutual exchange of courtesies the stranger left, with a promise of further help to the boy, and giving his address. Six months later he received a letter from the youth, whom he had seen several times in the interval, telling of his father's desire to see him—he had a communication to make—would the stranger come at once? He went and found his genial rescuer from the storm in some distress of mind.

'My doctor tells me my days are numbered. There is my son, he esteems you highly. I shall have to leave him.'

'How is it with yourself? Your last letter was cheering.'

'How can I thank you or God? On a seeming accident hung all my eternal destiny. God sent you to me. I know no subtle methods of expression, I have no set doctrines, I know nothing of dogma—but I know God as my Saviour.'

'Then you are well provided for here and hereafter,' was the reply.

'Yes,' your coming that day in the storm was the beginning of new life to me. Every question of my heart was carried to the book, and there I found the answer. When my son told me the other day that he wished to become a minister of the Gospel, for that you had shown him Jesus, and he rejoiced in salvation, I was overjoyed. Then I heard my own death warrant; but I told my doctor it was all right for me, I only feared for my son.'

'Fear not,' said his friend, 'his feet are set upon a rock, his heart is right with God. He is a fine young Christian.'

Two months more and the patient was passing away.

'It is all gloriously bright,' he whispered. 'Nothing between!' I have such confidence

in my loving Saviour—I am so weak, he is so strong—he calls me out of the storm, now.'

And presently he passed away, another testimony to the wonder-working, far-reaching, miraculous, converting power of the mercy, grace, and love of God, 'the only wise Saviour.'—*London Christian.*

Glad He Prayed.

Too many Christian parents neglect that which would prove to be the sweetest, dearest part of the whole day, through timidity or indifference. To such we would commend this little story which is related as being a true experience.

'For many years I was a nominal Christian, but never took any active part in church work. We had one child, a sturdy boy about three years old. We had no family altar; but my wife, who was an earnest Christian woman, always had the little boy say his prayers before he went to bed.'

'Frequently after his prayer was finished, he would look up into his mother's face and say, "Mamma, why doesn't papa pray?" She often told me about it, and urged me to have family prayers, but I was indifferent to her request.'

'One Sunday evening the preacher's sermon contained a message for me, and I went home from service and took down the old Bible and said, "Wife, we'll have family prayers to-night." My little boy was all attention as I read the chapter, and as we knelt while I offered a brief and broken prayer. Then the little fellow climbed up into my lap, and put his arms around my neck, and said, as he kissed me, "It's so glad papa prayed."

'When his mother put him to bed that night, he kept repeating over and over, "It's so glad papa prayed." The next day I went to my work, and in the middle of the forenoon I was called home. While his mother was in the back part of the house, my little boy had climbed up on the open fire-grate to get something off the mantel. His little dress caught fire, and he ran screaming into the front yard. Before anyone could get to him his clothes were all burned off, and he was unconscious and lived but a short time.'

'As I looked at the little body from which the spirit had gone to the Saviour of the little ones, the sweetest comfort was the words of my little boy, "It's so glad papa prayed." I would not take all the wealth of the world in exchange for the memory of those last words of my boy, "It's so glad papa prayed." My life belongs to my Master now, and I am living in the sweet hope of seeing my boy some day in heaven.'—*Union Gospel News.*

Guidance.

As a number of us were gathered around a blazing camp fire on the edge of a trout lake in the backwoods of Canada the other day, one of the fellows, apropos of something else, made a remark deprecatory of the large salary which a certain minister known to us all was getting. After a general discussion of ministers' salaries the conversation gradually drifted into a discussion of a calling in life. All were agreed that no one should enter the ministry without a definite call. 'But,' one asked, 'does that hold true in the case of an ordinary clerk? Suppose he finds himself with two positions open to him, one of which is considerably more advantageous than the other from a financial standpoint, and neither of which has any drawbacks from a religious standpoint, is it necessary that he should feel called to one or the other?'

'Well,' said another, as he wriggled a little nearer to the fire. 'I'll tell you how it

was with me. I was a clerk in a railway station till I was eighteen. At that age I was converted, and as my position demanded Sunday work I gave notice next pay-day that I was going to leave, without any idea where I would find work. That winter I attended a business college in New York and did some work in the Y.M.C.A. Some time after, I was asked if I would not like to go into Y.M.C.A. work, and, though much against my inclination, feeling called to it, I accepted, and went to the training school.'

So he went on to tell us, with minute detail, how he had been providentially loaned money when it was most needed to help him through his training-school course, and how now as he looked back on the past he could see how each link of his life had been a distinct step forward in a consecutive path, though they seemed anything but that at the time they were made, and he attributes this to the fact that no decisive action had been taken without previous prayer for guidance.

When we try to make an unaided decision between two openings we can but see it as a single step, but God will give our path consecutiveness if we are willing to follow as he leads.

But how are we to know when God calls? Are we to pray and then to wait with blank minds for a feeling as to which is the best way? No; it is necessary to use our reason to the fullest extent, to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed course, but to do so after prayer and from a Christian standpoint. We may appear to make mistakes even then, but any mistake which we may make while honestly trusting God for guidance and seeking to do his will, will certainly be overruled for good.

How did Abraham know the voice of God? Because Abraham was acquainted with God, and was willing to obey God. God says, 'I will guide thee with mine eye,' and it is evident that we cannot follow that kind of guidance unless we are constantly looking God in the eye. We cannot expect to receive guidance from God in times of difficulty or perplexity if we do not care for God's guidance when things seem to be going well with us.

God's call to Abraham required of him a great sacrifice, and God's call to service now always involves some sacrifice. But the reward which God gives for faithful service is infinitely greater than the sacrifice which he demands.—W., in 'Sabbath Reading.'

The Temperance Ship.

In a wake of light, with canvas as white
As foam on the waves of the sea,
Fast making her trip is the Temperance ship,
Bound to all lands that are free.

A flag is nailed fast to each tapering mast,
The flag of the free and the brave;
Rend the air with huzzas for the banner of
stars
And the good old ship on the wave.

With Truth at the helm, though the waves
overwhelm;
Not a thread will be torn from her sail.
Her colors are true as the Red, White, and
Blue,
Hurrah for the ship in the gale!

The flag at her bow is stainless as snow,
The white flag of honor and peace;
And the canvas which crowds like clouds
upon clouds,
Is soft as the wind-woven fleece.

On that deck, firm and true, stand the Cap-
tain and crew;
'All is well,' the commander cries;
'We shall gain the port, we shall storm the
fort.
For victory goes where our banner flies.'
—George W. Bungay.