

MY PRAYER.

"Lord, give me Light!" The answer to my cry
Was deeper darkness as the days crept by.
"Lord, give me Joy!" instead, a weary pain
Stole in where I had thought the Joy would reign.
"Give Purity; make clean my heart within."
Alas! what unsuspected depths of sin.
"Power, Lord! I would do exploits in Thy
name."

Yet, "weaker than of old," I owned with shame.
"Give Liberty! Soul-freedom let me gain."
Till now I had not known how cruel the chain.
"Patience, my God, send Patience to my aid!"
There came a one-word telegram, "Delayed,"
"For Hope I plead." Fair Hope appeared in view,
But, ere I could embrace her, she withdrew.
"Faith give me, Lord! Give faith to be mine
own."

"My child, Faith never travels all alone."
"Lord, bring me love! Grant me this last request."
Love swiftly came, and with her all the rest.

THE BLESSINGS IN MEDITATION.

Many Christians who say their prayers regularly never meditate. The very words seem to them rather to belong to religious phraseology than to describe anything actual and practical in a Christian's life. Yet they little know how much they lose with reference to the life of our Lord and Saviour by neglecting this most healthful and fruitful exercise.

You say you do not know how to set about it. Very well, try something of this kind: After saying your morning prayers open a New Testament and ask God to enable you to realize His presence and to send His Holy Spirit to enlighten and guide you. Then read two or three verses, or a short paragraph, a miracle, a parable, a part of a discourse, as the case may be. Do not think of its grammatical or historical or literary aspects, but say: "What do these words say to me? What truth do they teach? What fault do they correct? What effort do they prescribe or encourage? What resolutions do they make necessary?" If earnest, you will soon see your way. Scripture is so full of meanings that the real difficulty is which to select out of its abundance. Then, having decided on the main lessons of the passage, pray earnestly that you may practically remember them and turn to them, in whatever way, to the best account.

The whole exercise need not take up more than ten minutes; but at the end of a year it will, if regularly practised, have made a great difference in matters which most intimately concern the soul. It is one way of so handling the Gospel history as to become convinced of its truth from perceiving its intimate sympathy with and adaptation to our own case. Instead of a vague, half-remembered, less than half-comprehended story, the life of Jesus, steadily meditated on, passes into the life of the Christian by an insensible but real transfusion. It is turned, in *secum et sanguinem*, into the very substance of all that is truest and deepest in thought and heart. It illuminates, it warms, it invigorates, and by doing this it gives that inward proof of its own reality which has been most highly prized by the most devoted servants of God. As of old, so now it is true that the man is blessed whose delight is in the revealed law of the Lord, and who meditates upon it conscientiously. It is like a tree planted by the water side, who will bring forth his fruit in due season; his leaf also shall not wither, and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.—Canon Liddon.

WINTERING PLANTS.

To keep plants in the cellar over winter you must keep them free from water, for water has killed more plants than all other causes combined. Especially is this true in the case of the amateur. She longs to carry her plants safely through the winter and her solicitude leads her to water her treasures, giving a little water here and there when she thinks the soil looks dry or the plants wilted, and occasionally giving a thorough soaking to some particularly dry-looking pot or tub. A few days later her anxiety carries her back into the cellar. The plants do not look well, and the watering pot is again brought into requisition. And so it goes on, and gradually her plants droop and die, and more watering does not seem to revive them. Another year she will probably declare that keeping plants in a cellar is a delusion and cannot be accomplished successfully, and she will leave many of her

choice specimens in the open ground to be cut down by the frost.

Whereas, with a little care, the cellar may be made to carry through a fine assortment of plants to contribute toward another summer's pleasure. One may often see flourishing beds of flowers in the early spring—long before it was safe to remove plants from a greenhouse—and upon inquiry invariably find they came from some thrifty housewife's cellar.

WHEN THE SONG BEGINS.

A singer told the story of how all had been changed for her. She sang only for ambition because she hoped to gather fame and wealth. But one Sunday she went to sing in a prison after the minister had preached. Among the convicts was one with strangely sad and hungry eyes. "I sang to that one man," the singer said, "and as I sang a power that was never mine before was given me. The tears ran down the man's cheeks as he listened. Faces all about me began to soften." It was a holy moment for the singer. She had risen out of mere professionalism, and her soul had been touched and thrilled with the love of Christ. From that day all was new for her. When does the song begin in time of sorrow? "Ah," some one says, "I cannot sing them. Surely it is not expected that I shall sing when my dead are lying before me," but the Christian is always ready to sing. "Rejoice always," means on the day when the crape is on the door as well as on the day when all is bright within. Some day we shall know that every sorrow in our lives held a secret joy for us. The song begins only now? When we submit ourselves to God in our grief, acquiescing without question in His will, and opening our hearts to secure whatever blessing He has sent us in the sorrow.—"The Blossom of Thorns," J. R. Miller.

FINISH YOUR JOBS.

Many persons seem to be always in a hurry, and yet never accomplish much; others never seem to be hurried, and yet do a very great deal. If you have fifty letters to answer, don't waste too much time in looking over to find which one should be noticed first; answer the one you first lay your hands on, and then go through the whole pile as fast as possible.

Some begin a thing and leave it partially completed, and hurry off to something else. A better plan is to complete whatever you undertake before you leave it, and be thorough in everything; the going back and forth from one thing to another wastes valuable time.

Another thing: Deliberate workers are those who accomplish the most work in a given time and are less tired at the end of the day than many who have not accomplished half so much. The hurried worker has often to do his work twice over, and even then it is seldom done in the best manner, either as to neatness or durability. It is the deliberate and measured expenditure of strength which invigorates the constitution and builds up the health; multitudes of firemen have found an early death, while the plow-boy lives healthily and lives long, going down to his grave beyond three-score and ten.—"Halls Journal of Health."

DEALING WITH A BOY IN HIS TEENS.

If we keep our eyes and ears open, we can learn much that will benefit us from those who have succeeded in life. Every true parent welcomes any information that will help him solve the many problems which arise in dealing with his own boy. The other day in conversation with a stranger, incidentally he told me how he had managed his boy. Charlie was now 15, well grown, genial and handsome, and notwithstanding the comforts of his own home, he began to go out at night to be with his comrades. Each night Charlie remained out later, until it was brought to the notice of his father. So on one occasion the father remained up to meet his boy when he came in. Finally about eleven o'clock Charlie came in, hung his hat and overcoat on the rack, when the father called him in for a chat.

"Charlie," the kind father said, "I have told you that it is my wish for you not to go out at night, and you have disobeyed me. You are the first one to do this. It is not good for you to be out at night, and it gives your mother and myself great anxiety. Now, Charlie, you must not leave this house at night again without my permission. I want you to have pleasure and recreation, but home is the place for you at night, and especially at this age." This boy chafed under

such restrictions for a few nights, but soon submitted, and found plenty to do in his own home to entertain and improve himself.

For the lack of one such firm command many a boy has followed his own natural inclination to "stay out at night" until he was ruined. Parents cannot afford to be careless on this point. It is a turning point, a critical period which often determines the destiny of the boy. The question is, "Shall we provide for the young folks books, stationery, amusements and cheerfulness at home, or allow them to seek their rest and pleasure on the streets with other boys."—Southern Home.

THE MOTHER HEART.

By Margaret E. Sangster.

Nobody sits in that little arm-chair;
It stands in a corner dim;
But a white-haired mother gazing there,
And yearningly thinking of him,
Sees through the dusk of long ago
The bloom on her boy's sweet face,
As he rocks so merrily to and fro,
With a laugh that cheers the place.

Sometimes he holds a book in his hand,
Sometimes a pencil and slate;
And the lesson is hard to understand,
And the figures hard to mate;
But she sees the nod of the father's head,
So proud of his little son,
And she hears the word so often said,
"No fear for our little one."

They were wonderful days, the dear, sweet days,
When a child with sunny hair
Was hers to scold, to kiss, and to praise,
At her knee in the little chair.
She lost him back in her busy years,
When the great world caught the man,
As he strode away past hopes and fears
To his place in the battle's van.

But now and then, in a wistful dream,
Like a picture out of date,
She sees a head with a golden gleam
Bent over a pencil and slate,
And she lives again the happy day,
The day of her young life's spring,
When the small arm-chair stood just in the way,
The centre of everything.

THE EAR.

No oily substance, poultice or liniment should be put into the ear, because great injury is liable to be done. Warm water is the best possible and about the only safe "wash." Do not scratch the ear with any metal; pinheads, hairpins or ear picks should be tabooed. Do not scream if an insect enters the ear; warm water will drown and wash out the "remains." The ear is not so liable to injury as from the frantic effort to dislodge it. Do not put anything cold into the ear; even cold water should be avoided, especially if there is any affection of the hearing. Do not put cotton into the ear if there is any discharge of pus. Use warm water as frequently as may be necessary to keep them clean, but do not force the foul matter back into the delicate machinery. If any small, hard substance falls into the ear, do not attempt to "dig it out." If not readily removable, allow it to remain quiet and have a physician take care of it when convenient; it is not likely to do any serious harm unless tampered with. Anything that is soluble may be washed out, with a little patience, by the use of a syringe and warm water; if it is not soluble it is harmless. Deafness may sometimes be caused by an excess of ear wax, which has become hardened and obstructs the action of the membrane. Either have a careful hand apply the warm water through a proper syringe, or a piece of cotton wadding wet with essence of peppermint may be introduced, which will dissolve and may absorb the hardened wax in a few hours.

GOD'S PURPOSES.

God can do great things with our lives if we but give them to Him in sincerity. He can make them useful, uplifting, heroic. God never wastes anything. God never forgets anything. God never loses anything. As long as we live we have a work to do. We shall never be too old for it, nor too feeble. Illness, weakness, fatigue, sorrow—none of these things can excuse us from this work of ours. That we are alive to-day is proof positive that God has something for us to do to-day.—Anna R. B. Lindsay.