

With pained and pleading look these words were spoken :

"I gave my life for thee ;
Wilt thou give naught to me ?"

Quickly the half dollar was thrown away by the trembling listener and a coin of gold was laid instead upon the bleeding palm. As the shining bit touched the wound the flow of blood was lessened. In the attitude of divine benediction the Lord Christ thus spoke : "Disciple, thou hast wrought a good work upon me. The tears of my people must be wiped away ; the nations must be purged from sin ; the gospel of good tidings must sound in every ear before this bleeding wound can be healed. Blessed be those who hasten on the day."

Deep organ tones awakened the sleeper when the collection was about to be taken. Clutching at her husband's arm, Mrs. Whitcomb whispered eagerly :

"John, you won't put in that fifty cents, will you ? Why, dear, it is the hand of the Lord !"

In bewilderment the judge looked at his bewildered wife, who pleaded again :

"I mean the contribution box, John ; it is the hand of Christ, our Lord ! Could you lay a few cents upon it ?"

"No, wife," was the joyous reply. "I will give \$15."

"Very well ; and I'll give as much more."

Was it his wife who thus spoke—the same who had outwitted him in the morning ? Yes, the very same woman, renewed. She had seen the Lord and heard His words. She had learned the deep meaning of the Saviour's "inasmuch." Never again would "good judgment" keep her from ministering to her crucified Redeemer through the poor, the sorrowing and the benighted. The contribution box had been transformed ; but still more wonderful and blessed was the transformation that had taken place in one of the King's daughters.—*Exchange*.

NO SHORT CUT.

There is no short cut to the life of faith, which is the all-vital condition of a holy and victorious life. We must have periods of lonely meditation and fellowship with God. That our souls should have their mountains of fellowship, their valleys of quiet rest beneath the shadow of a great rock, their nights beneath the stars, when darkness has veiled the material and silenced the stir of human life, and has opened the view of the infinite and eternal, is as indispensable as that our bodies should have food. Thus alone can the sense of God's presence become the fixed possession of the soul, enabling it to say repeatedly, with the Psalmist, "Thou art near, O God !" —*Rev. F. B. Meyer*.

KILLING A PRAYER-MEETING.

A stereotyped form of conducting prayer-meeting cannot be used to edification. The condition of the church and neighborhood, the circumstances of individuals, and the state of the Church at large must be taken into account. Often a suggestion is brought to the mind of the pastor or other leader of the meeting after he has taken his place, which will lead him into a far more appropriate and effective train of thought than that to which he had given considerable time in preparation.

At the same time, the pastor or other leader of a prayer-meeting should come to it bringing a message carefully thought out and of an appropriate character. In this way he will be better prepared to make a profitable use of any new subject that may present itself to his mind.

One thing is certain, the prayers, hymns, Scripture readings, and addresses should be brief, so as to give as much life as possible to the entire service.

We read the other day of a pastor who at the regular weekly prayer-meeting offered the opening prayer, which was fifteen minutes in length, read the Scriptures, and made an address, leaving but ten minutes for the other exercises, though quite a number of people accustomed to lead in prayer, to edification, or even to make brief addresses when necessary, were present.

And sometimes it occurs that, when the meeting is "thrown open," that is, when an opportunity is given by the leader to others to make short addresses or offer voluntary prayer, the first man who takes the floor consumes nearly all the remaining time. Better methods of killing a prayer-meeting cannot be devised.—*Ex.*

CHRISTIAN OLD AGE.

Old age ought to be the most beautiful period of a good life. Yet not always is it so. There are elements in the experience of old age which make it hard to keep the inner life in a state of renewal. The bodily powers are decaying. The senses are growing dull. It is lonely. There is in memory a record of empty cribs and vacant chairs, of sacred mounds in the cemetery. The work of life has dropped from the hands. It is not easy to keep the joy living in the heart in such experiences.

Yet that is the problem of true Christian living. While the outward man decays, the inward man should be renewed day by day. This is possible, too, as many Christian old people have proved. Keeping near the heart of Christ is again, as always, the secret. Faith gives a new meaning to life. It is seen no more in its relation to earth and what is gone, but in its relation to immortality and what is to come.

The Christian old man's best days are not behind him, but always before him. He is walking, not toward the end, but toward the beginning.—*Northwestern*.