

SOMETHING ABOUT PRAYER.

SOMETIMES we pray and pray, and still the favor we ask for is not granted. Why not? In the first place whatever God does is right, and it is not for us to ask Him for reasons why He has done this or why he has not done it. God knows, that is sufficient. But generally the reason why God does not grant our petitions is because we do not pray for the right thing or with the right intention. A baby that wishes to play with a sharp knife, bawls if the mother takes the knife away. We act in the same way. God knows better what is good for us than we do ourselves, consequently we ought to place all our confidence in Him. Sometimes we think that God is bound to give us what we pray for, there we are mistaken. We must never claim as a right what is only a favor, or else we are impertinent. Before we open our mouth for prayer we must always make an act of resignation to God's will in our heart. We must say, that even if God does not grant us what we pray for, still we are satisfied, we love Him just as much as if He had granted it. But if we think by our prayer we can command God, we find out that this is not so. We must not think that God is bound to gratify all our desires—sometimes they are very foolish indeed, if we look at them in the right light—we must not be impertinent, such children neither God nor man loves. Other times we think we have done a great thing if we have prayed two or three times. This is another mistake. We should pray continually. We know that even saints had to pray for years and years sometimes before God heard them; are we any better than they were? Have we any more right to be heard than they had? A clear conscience is the best guarantee for the prayers success, and one benefit prayer always has: It brings us nearer to God, it awakens in our hearts the feeling that we are God's children; like the rays of the sun awakening beautiful flowers that sleep in the bosom of mother earth, so does prayer—a messenger divine between God and man—awaken in our hearts the consciousness that God loves us.

LET IT DROP!

LET it drop! How many souls on the verge of solicitude and trouble have been calmed by this homely saying!

A sharp or unjust word irritates us. Let it drop; the speaker will only be too glad to see that we have forgotten it. A painful circumstance threatens to separate us from some old friends. Let it drop; let us preserve peace and holy charity. A suspicious manner is on the point of chilling our affection. Let it drop; our looks of trust shall win back confidence. Shall we, who try so hard to avoid the prick of thorns, take pains to gather them up and pierce our own hearts? Truly, we are very unreasonable beings!

"That was very greedy of you, Tommy, to eat your little sister's share of the cake!" "You told me, Ma, that I was always to take her part," said Tommy.

Grocer.—Well, my little boy, what will you have?

Little Boy.—Fifteen cents' worth of molasses. Grocer (as he hands the pitcher over the counter).—Where is your money?

Little Boy.—In the pitcher. I put it there so as to be sure not to lose it.

"Fo' de Lawd, Missus, but dat chile hab got a fine voice."

"You think so?"

"I do fo' snah, if it was only plowed."

"Plowed, Uncle Ned? I guess you mean cultivated."

"Yes, dat's it. I knowed it had something to do wid a farm."

"AN OLD FRIEND."

OH Santa Claus is a friend indeed
The little ones love him dearly;
He knows exactly what they need,
In the tiniest stockings his eyes can read
The wants of the owners clearly.

With thoughts of his gifts their dreams are bright
As they wonder where he is hiding,
And how he can do so much in a night
From the realms of the Frost King cold and white
On the wings of the north wind riding.

There are presents for all in his splendid store,
But nobody feels quite certain
Which way he goes when his task is o'er,
Whether up the chimney or under the door,
Or through a chink in the curtain.



"We knew he would come," the children say
As they reckon their new-found pleasures;
"It wouldn't have seemed like Christmas Day
If Santa Claus had not found a way
To leave us some of his treasures."

And grown-up children who walk by sight,
Their innocent trust might borrow,
And leave their wishes in faith at night
Before the Giver of all delight,
To find them filled on the morrow!

—Leisure Hours.

THE INFANT JESUS.

ONCE more the Infant Jesus comes,
To welcome all with outstretched hand,
To bring bright joy to Christian homes
And happiness throughout the land.
His smile dispels all dread and fear;
His birth makes holy Christmas-tide,
And children far and children near
Are kneeling at their Saviour's side.
O, Infant blessed! we pray to thee,
Make pure our hearts as thine to-day,
And let the year about to be
Be heaven's advent, blooming May.

BADGES OF THE APOSTLES.

THE painters of the Middle Ages used to represent the Apostles with special badges which were generally symbolical of some special incident in their lives.

St. Andrew was depicted with a cross, because he was crucified; St. Bartholomew with a knife, because he was flayed; St. James the Greater with a Pilgrim staff and a gourd bottle, because he was the patron saint of pilgrims; St. James the Less with a fuller's pole, because he was slain by Simeon the fuller, with a blow on the head with the pole; St. John with a cup and a winged serpent flying out of it, in allusion to the tradition that the apostle was challenged by a priest of Diana to drink a cup of poison. St. John made the sign of the cross on the cup, whereupon Satan, like a Dragon, flew from it, and the apostle drank the cup with safety.

Judas was represented with a bag, because he bore the bag and "what was put therein;" St. Jude with a club, because he was killed by that weapon; St. Matthew with a hatchet, because he was slain with one; St. Matthias with a battle axe, because after having been stoned he was beheaded; St. Paul with a sword, because his head was cut off with one; St. Peter with a bunch of keys and also with a cock, the keys to represent his power and jurisdiction—the cock his denial of Christ before he received from Him the glorious privilege of infallibility; St. Philip with a long staff surmounted by a cross, because he died by being hung by the neck to a tall pillar; St. Simeon with a saw, because he was sawn to death; St. Thomas with a lance, because his body was pierced with a lance.

HERE SHE IS AGAIN.

IN one of those souper schools which were set up in Ireland, by bigotry, to make the peasants change their faith during the time of the famine, other among the poor children whom hunger compelled to enter was a bright little lad who knew the prayers which his good mother had taught him in better days. The teacher called upon this bright little lad to say the "Our Father." The child repeated it promptly; and, as he had been accustomed to do when saying his prayers at his mother's side, continued on with the "Hail Mary," but he was quickly interrupted by the souper, who in pious horror commanded the child to stop, and added in a very severely pious tone: "We don't want to hear anything about the Virgin Mary here. Go on with

"I believe in God." The little fellow could not precisely understand why the name of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, should be forbidden, but he understood that the souper had discarded her from that school, where piety and soup were doled out in small portions. Duly impressed with this conviction, the lad began: "I believe in God," and went on smoothly until he came to the words "and was conceived by the Holy Ghost;" having recited these words, he suddenly stopped, scratching his head with rustic perplexity, yet with a twinkle in his pretty blue eyes. "Well, what's the matter? Why don't you go on, my lad?" "Please sir," exclaimed the little fellow, "here she is again."

Tract lady to ticket seller, "Do you sell tickets at reduced rates to servants of the Lord?" Ticket agent (blandly): "Certainly, madam, if you have an order from your master."

"Prisoner at the bar," said the judge, "is there anything you wish to say before sentence is passed upon you?" The prisoner looked wistfully toward the door, and remarked that he would like to say "Good evening," if it would be agreeable to the company. But they wouldn't let him.