

31 out of the 168 could not tell the book of the Bible in which they are written; 40 could not tell the part of Scripture where the Lord's prayer is found; and 31 of the 40 did not know the name of its author. The Ten Commandments form a synopsis of the law of God, which is fulfilled in one word—Love. The response is a prayer asking God to write His law in our hearts.

The collects for the ruling monarch were composed by our Reformers. They are in keeping with the spirit of loyalty which has always characterized the English Church, and in accordance with the apostolic injunction to pray for kings and all in authority.

The Nicene Creed, the greater part of which was drawn up at the Council of Nicea in 325, is a statement of belief in the great doctrines of our faith. The creed was first repeated in the communion service in 471. It soon spread to Spain and Gaul, and the churches of the west. It was specially directed against the followers of Arius and Macedonius, who taught that the Lord Jesus Christ was not the only begotten Son of God, and therefore not God, and that the Holy Ghost was only a creature. It is a plain declaration of the divinity of Christ, of His co-eternity with the Father, and of the Godhead of the Holy Ghost. It is only in the creeds that the church recognizes the individual worshipper. In our prayers, it is "Our Father," "Give us," "We have erred," etc. In the creed, it is "I believe." It throws the responsibility of the confession of faith upon the individual. And this is as it should be, for faith is a personal matter. Every soul must answer as the individual before God, and the great transaction (if we may so speak) is completed by itself. We live in families, we worship as a congregation; but faith and salvation rest between the individual and God.

W. J. ARMITAGE.

#### FOR PARISH AND HOME.

#### ONLY ONE STANDARD FOR ALL.

THE tendency to set up a high standard of morality or of Christian living for others, and to be satisfied with a lower one for ourselves, is very general. We are usually quick to condemn questionable practices or neglect of duty in our neighbors, while guilty of the same faults ourselves. Examples of this failing are often met with in the criticism which a clergyman and his conduct undergo at the hands of his people. A Canadian bishop relates that in a certain parish a clergyman became so unpopular that the members of the vestry

petitioned for his removal. The bishop appointed a commission to ascertain, if possible, the real causes of complaint. Among the witnesses examined was one of the churchwardens. Among other grievances, he complained that the clergyman had never in any of his parochial visits conducted family worship at his house.

"Did you ever hand him a Bible and invite him to do so?" enquired one of the commissioners.

"No; I always waited for the clergyman to propose it."

"Is it your custom to conduct family worship regularly in your own home?"

"No; we do not observe it unless a minister is present to take the lead."

"Well, why do you find fault with a visitor for not taking upon himself a duty which you, the head of the household, neglect to perform?"

"Oh, sir, we always expect a clergyman to be a better living man than other people."

This incident expresses the opinion of many besides the person quoted, but it is altogether at variance with the teaching of the book which we all profess to take as our guide. The rules for holy living left on record by the inspired writers were intended not for one set of Christians alone, but apply equally to us all. While great responsibility rests upon the clergy in setting a godly example in all things, it is the duty of all who acknowledge Christ as their Master to satisfy themselves with nothing short of the very highest possible degree of holiness. Only when this truth is clearly understood and universally acted upon will the church at large be a witness to the world of her divine authority, and become the irresistible power for good, which, unhappily, she now fails to be owing to the low level of spirituality at which so many of her members habitually live.

F. J. L.

#### THE CRY OF THE PEAR TREE.

ONCE heard C. H. Spurgeon represent the Gospel as a laden pear tree, calling for baskets. "Baskets, bring baskets!" was the cry. "Who has any?" The preacher represented some one saying, "I have one, but it is empty." "Bring it along," said he, "that is just the sort needed." "I must find a full one," said another. "You may keep your full one," replied the pear tree; "I only fill empty ones. Baskets, bring baskets—empty baskets!" The preacher represented them coming, and being filled, and still the cry was, "Baskets, bring baskets—baskets that are

empty!" for the fruit multiplied as it was gathered. "Blessed are the empty, for they shall be filled," if not an exact text, is very nearly so.—*Selected.*

KIND actions are like stars

That skim on a wintry night  
Here and there 'mid the clouds and darkness,  
All pure with a holy light.

Kind words, like heavenly music,  
In softest cadence low,  
Soothes the heart that might be breaking,  
Bound down with its weight of woe.

A look sometimes of kindness,  
When the heart's too full to speak,  
May help and cheer many a one  
Who is sad, and low, and weak.

Oh! never withhold a kindness,  
And joy to yourself it will bring!  
The good it will do you ne'er may know;  
For though small, 'tis a priceless thing.

—*Fletcher.*

#### THE INDIVIDUALITY OF PRAISE.

"BLESS the Lord, O my soul." Blessed be God, He makes room for me. Come, my soul, He bids thee join His choir. He would hear thy voice, and that not only in the choruses, but for a solo. Our characters differ much, and yet more do our circumstances. Now, nobody has ever yet been led along the way in all its windings by which I have come. To me has been given some token of His love that none else ever proved. So then I, even I, can bring some note of music without which the great chorus of God's praise is incomplete. If I am dumb, there lies forever "forgotten in unthankfulness" some revelation of His goodness, some deed of His love. "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" Do not envy any man. Do not try to be anybody else. Be thou filled with His praise; and if it be like no other, so much the better. Yet do not want others to be as thou art; rather, soul, be thankful that so few are like thee. But be thyself. God, "who maketh us to differ," wants the strains of my voice, the song of my soul. Shall the bass of the organ refuse to lend its music because the treble leads? Or shall the treble be dumb because the thundering bass makes more ado? Are not all needful to the fulness of the praise? My soul, take thy part. Rouse thee to this blessed work. Whoever else is silent, be thou filled with praise. Thy God, who hath filled thee with good things, listens for thy voice; if it be wanting, He is grieved, and thou art condemned. It is said that once when Sir Michael Costa was having a rehearsal with a vast army of performers and hundreds of voices, as the mighty