

FAMILY PRAYER.

There is one mark of a household, in which God is known and loved, which is to often wanting in our day—I mean the *practice of family prayer*. Depend upon it, the worth of a practice of that kind can only be measured by its effects during a long period of time; and family prayers though occupying only a few minutes, do make a great difference to any household at the end of a year. How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when each morning, and, perhaps, each evening, too, all the members of the family, the old and the young, the parents and the children, the master and the servants, meet on a footing of the same equality before the Eternal, in whose presence each is as nothing, or less than nothing; yet to whom each is so infinitely dear that he has redeemed by his blood each and all of them? How must not the bad spirits that are the enemies of pure and bright family life flee away—the spirits of envy and pride, and untruthfulness and sloth, and the whole tribe of evil thoughts, and make way for his gracious presence in the hearts of old and young alike, who, as he brings one by one nearer to the end of our existence, so does he, and he alone, makes us to be “of one mind in a house,” here within the narrow precincts of each home circle, and hereafter in that countless family of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples and tongues, which shall dwell with him, the universal parent of all eternity.—*Canon Liddon.*

EAGER TO 'BE A CHRISTIAN NATION.

The *Missionary Herald*, the organ of the American Board, prints a significant article of the Rev. J. H. Pettee, of Okayama, entitled, “A New Peril in Japan.” The writer says that the Japanese are showing an amazing eagerness to be known as a Christian nation. There is a strong movement among local officials favoring a nominal acceptance

of the least exacting form of Christianity, the Roman Catholic. Mere assent to the name of Christian is regarded as sufficient evidence of change of heart and life. The most progressive secular paper in the kingdom has openly advocated baptizing the Emperor and a few of the nobles, that Japan may be considered a Christian nation. Last December the Russian minister to Japan died and was buried in Tokio. The funeral service was simply and solely of the Greek Catholic form. Princes of the blood, Cabinet Ministers, and other high Japanese officials were present. It means far more than mere diplomatic courtesy. The Mikado wore mourning for twenty-one days on receiving the news of the death of his Catholic Majesty King Alphonso of Spain, and a representative of the royal family attended requiem mass for the dead King in the Roman Catholic chapel at Tokio. And yet it is not long since one of the imperial decrees read: “Let no Christian henceforth dare enter Japan, and let it be known unto all that if the King of Spain himself or the Christian's God of All violate this decree, he shall pay therefor with his head.”

THE KING'S BUSINESS.

Just as a minister was going out to preach he received a visit from a man who wished to converse with him on the second coming of Christ, and who insisted that it was not very far distant.

“When do you think it will be?” asked the minister.

“Perhaps to-day,” answered the stranger.

“In that case, my friend, we have no time to talk, I must go and preach the gospel; and, so far as you are concerned, what you ought to do is this very day to call sinners to repentance.”

The new Mayor of Shanghai, China, is a native Christian. This is indeed a significant promise of His coming. A very few years ago and Chinese prejudices would not have permitted such an honor to be conferred on a Christian.