



The Family Circle.

PRAY, ALWAYS PRAY.

REV. E. H. BICKERSTETH, D.D., BISHOP OF EXETER.
"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."
Luke 18: 1.

I.

Pray always pray; the Holy Spirit pleads
With thee and for thee; tell Him all thy needs.

II.

Pray, always pray; beneath sin's heaviest load
Prayer sees the blood from Jesus' side that
flowed.

III.

Pray, always pray; though weary, faint and
lone,
Prayer nestles by the Father's sheltering throne.

IV.

Pray, always pray; amid the world's turmoil
Prayer keeps the heart at rest and nerves for
toil.

V.

Pray, always pray; it joys thy pathway throng,
Prayer strikes the harp and sings the angels'
song.

VI.

Pray, always pray; if loved ones pass the veil,
Prayer drinks with them of springs that cannot
fail.

VII.

All earthly things with earth shall fade away;
Prayer grasps eternity; pray, always pray.

LOOKING BEYOND THE HILLS.

BY ESTHER CONVERSE.

"Mrs. Brown," said the pastor's wife, "I wish you would come to our missionary meeting this week."

"Well I don't know; I don't get out much," answered Mrs. Brown, evasively.

"I know you must be very busy with your large family and dairy, but perhaps it would rest you to come; we limit the exercises to an hour, so they are not tiresome."

"I didn't say I was too tired to go; I'm as strong as most folks, I guess. But, Miss Allen, I fail to see what earthly good it does,—your gettin' together and talkin' about Chiny, and Harpoot, and Koto. You get little enough money, and nobody seems to care much. Seems to me you might find plenty of work nearer home."

"My dear Mrs. Brown," said the pastor's wife, impulsively, "I thank you for your honesty and frankness. You have probably expressed the thoughts of many of our neighbors, for I am very unsuccessful in my attempts to awaken an interest in this work. May I tell you my reasons for deeming the work of great importance?"

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Brown. "I didn't mean any offence; I'm pretty free-spoken; I generally say what I think," she added, proudly.

"You gave no offence, and I am glad you have spoken; we cannot fight shadows. I am going to give you first a selfish view of the work. I need not remind you of the narrowness of a woman's life. The four walls of her home often limit her thoughts for days. I am sure you have sometimes felt the cramping, depressing influences of this."

"Yes;" interrupted Mrs. Brown; "only last night I stood at the sink washin' dishes and lookin' off onto the hills yonder, and it came over me like a surprise that there was something beyond; and then came a kind of bitter feelin' that I must go on washin' dishes, and mendin', and never know anything about it."

"Such thoughts are natural to most of us; and anything that sets in motion new currents of thought, broadens our sympathies, or rouses our intellect, cannot fail to be beneficial. Then, we revive our knowledge of geography; we learn of the manners and customs of other lands. I haven't time to speak of half the subjects in which I have become interested since my connection with this society. To the rich it is invaluable; it occupies much leisure time, and draws them from frivolity. Money that would, perhaps, be foolishly spent, is turned into useful channels. It helps to take us out of ourselves; it furnishes themes worthy of thought and speech, and in our prayers for others, we ourselves may, and do, receive a blessing."

"There's another thing," again interrupted Mrs. Brown: "prayin', I must say, is

quite beyond me. I was all of a tremble the last time I went, for fear I'd be called on. I believe my words would have raised no higher'n the ceilin', and settled down on us all again like a chill."

"I'm sorry you feel so; if you will come again you need not fear that. You say we get little money; that is true, but even a little helps. A little money goes a great way in China or India, in clothing and educating the children, or feeding the hungry, and kind words of sympathy are fully appreciated by those faithful teachers. Why should they spend their lives in those far-away lands more than we?"

"I know that the recollection of our interest and sympathy strengthens them for their work. I leave it to your own loving heart to tell you of the cup of cold water given in his name, and to remind you that—

"Whate'er we do for thine, O Lord,
We do it unto thee."

"Well, Miss Allen, I'll come. What you say about geography is true. I used to be real good in that; but last night, when father says, 'Where's Boocharest?' it came upon me suddenly like a glow out of the dark; I hadn't an idea—but, land! Annie spoke right up, and says, 'I'll show you father!' She knew!"

Mrs. Brown was present at the next meeting, and listened to the exercises with apparent interest. Returning home, the Sunday dress seemed to give a feeling of Sunday leisure, and instead of resuming at once her usual sewing or mending, she opened a geography left on the table by the children.

"Annie," said she, "where is Ezeroom? I heard a letter read to day from a missionary there, and I don't know where under the canopy it is." "I'll show you, mother," said Annie, kneeling by her side; "we've been studying about it lately, and our teacher has a brother, not far away, who is a missionary. She tells us wonderful things about the country. Mother," she asked, earnestly, "do you suppose I can ever see any of these places I study about?"

Mrs. Brown gave a startled glance at the flushed face so near her own, and carelessly answered, "O, may-be you will."

"Is it wrong for me to say I will go there some time?"

"I don't know, child; you'd better not talk about it." Mrs. Brown had resumed her sewing, and her needle flew through her work as she thought, "What if she should go to foreign lands! What if I should give a child to the work! Could I? And may-be her letters would be read in missionary meetings, and her name come out in print in the *Life and Light*! I guess I should be mighty proud of that! After all, what better could come to the child? I won't say anything to her, but I believe I'll put down a few steppin'-stones."

She arose and went to the bureau-drawer, where, under a pile of handkerchiefs, lay the old portmanteau containing the few dollars saved in those wonderful ways known only to prudent housewives. "I'll subscribe for the *Life and Light* and *Missionary Herald*! Miss Allen called for names, and I'll send Annie right over."

Before night the "steppin'-stones" were laid that aided the daughter in after years to climb to the height of unselfishness and self-abnegation that enables one to leave father and mother, home, friends, and native land for labor in the vineyard where the abundant harvest awaits its reapers.

Mrs. Brown was induced to take a "field," in which, through the influence of enthusiastic Annie, she became interested. Day after day as she stood at her dish-washing her thoughts wandered away to the wonderful country she located before the hills that bounded her vision; and while her hands were employed in their monotonous labor, she often thought of the occupation of her people—their dress, homes, food, amusements; and her questions in regard of these subjects greatly aided Mrs. Allen in maintaining the interest of the meetings. Her interest in the Sunday-school lessons increased, and often led to more extended research and thought. Can any one doubt that her own happiness also increased, and that husband, home, and children gained by the change?

When, unasked, her voice was raised in prayer with an earnestness that carried all hearts to that throne of grace from whence such prayers descend in gentle dews of divine blessing, Mrs. Allen was greatly moved. "Truly," she said, "in laboring for, in thinking of others, we ourselves are blessed; the two are one. We labor for foreign lands,

but the larger blessing falls in our midst, even on our own hearts. Foreign work is home work, after all."

When in after years letters were read at missionary gatherings from the zealous teacher who was so untiring in her devotion to her work, no one guessed the pride and joy of that white-haired mother who once found no pleasure in missionary words and work. Her life had been broadened, her soul enriched. Home walls and surrounding hills had no power to shut in a spirit that had broken its fetters, and claimed, in its unselfishness, kinship with the ignorant and oppressed of every nation and clime.—*Life and Light for Women.*

TOM SNOW, OR WAS IT GAMBLING?

BY M. L. MORELAND.

"It's a 'lucky piece,' I know," said Tom, tossing a bit of money into the air with one hand and catching it with the other while lying flat on his back.

"Where did you get it?"

"Won it throwing dice with Jack Brown and Fred Harper last night."

"Tom Snow, that was gambling!"

"I'd like to know why, Dick?" Tom began to lift himself up.

"Some one lost and you won. It's the meanest business in the world. You cannot make it anything else but gambling."

Tom lifted himself up to his full height and shrugged his shoulders. "You believe that Dick? How can you? It's on too small a scale for that."

"That's the way a thing always begins. Look out, Tom, or you'll get into trouble. I wish you'd keep away from Jack Brown and his set, any way."

"You're jealous, Dick. You want me all to yourself."

"No, Tom; you're wrong. Come over to the house and talk with Aunt Sara. She'll tell you I'm right."

"Come ahead! We'll prove that you're wrong yourself."

In the first place, Aunt Sara was a white-ribbon woman; in the second, a great friend to all the boys. Dick was her favorite nephew, and Tom had a large place in her heart because he was Dick's friend.

It was no new thing for these two boys to bring a matter to her. Whatever her judgment or decision, it was always accepted.

"Yes, Tom, Dick is right," said Aunt Sara when the matter was laid before her.

"But this is such a little thing!"

"Listen, Tom. My own brother and the playmate of my childhood was an inveterate gambler. I remember that first step. It was one afternoon when we were down in the orchard. One of his friends came over with two strange boys. One of the strangers proposed a game of marbles, and to 'play for keep.' My brother won every marble that the boys had. I told him it was gambling. He laughed. A few weeks later he brought home a knife that he won in 'betting.' All this troubled me. Though I was his dearest sister, he would not listen to me. He was always successful in 'winning,' and so dared to keep it up. He went through college carrying the same trait with him. Think of it, boys, he was nothing but a gambler when his school-days were over. He was known wherever he went as such. In large money affairs he carried the day.

"But there came a change. The men he associated with were wine-drinkers. They soon found out that my brother lost his power while under the influence of wine. He had always prided himself for being a temperance man, but his friends (enemies in disguise) urged him to drink with them. Thus they won his property, literally stealing it from him. Such a change as came over him! He was no longer my kind brother, but a wreck of humanity."

"Where is he now, Aunt Sara?" asked Dick.

"I don't know. He fled in disgrace and shame for his own safety. I think, Tom, he began with marbles—you with money."

Tom bowed his head on her shoulder in very shame. He felt the money burn in his pocket.

"It is the first time, and shall be the last; but what shall I do with it?" and Tom held the money toward Aunt Sara.

"Do you know where it belongs?"

"I shall have to explain if I return it."

"Of course; and you will, Tom, I am sure, since you belong to such white-ribbon women as your mother and myself. We expect something from our own boys in the

temperance work, and the sooner you begin the better."

"I'll do it. Come on, Dick."—Banner.

WHAT IS GOOD SOCIETY?

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

"I will not allow Blanche to associate with anyone not in good society," Mrs. D— said loftily.

"What do you mean by good society?" Mrs. L— asked with a smile.

Mrs. D— elevated her eyebrows in surprise as she answered—

"By good society I mean of course good society—people whose social position is equal to our own."

"In this so-called 'good society,'" Mrs. L— said, with unruffled mien, "there are many wretched counterfeits mingled with the pure coin, and among the 'lower class,' as you are pleased to term it, there are many jewels. It is a comforting thought to me that my daughter Estelle has chosen her friends without reference to their environments. The companionship of such simple, modest and good girls as Ella and Eula Stevens will, I've no doubt, be of incalculable benefit to her. They are sweet and pure and true-hearted."

"But what do they know about conducting themselves in society?"

"Not much, certainly; but they are apt, and can quickly adapt themselves to any circumstances, I think. Just at present, considering they are only young girls, it is commendable that they are somewhat backward in regard to matters of dress, flirtations and such trivial things."

Mrs. L—'s estimate of the young Stevens girls was correct; they were girls, not premature women. They had been trained to be useful as well as ornamental. Their hands had been taught to move the wheels of the home machinery, as well as to perform skilful workmanship. Their naturally intelligent minds had been cultivated so that it was a real pleasure to converse with them. They were bright and gay and "as full of fun as a sound nut is of meat," Estelle L— said; but there was not a shadow of vanity or frivolousness about either of them.

Blanche D—, who had been spending the morning with some shallow girls of good society (?)—"good society," in their estimation, being a matter of "fine feathers make fine birds," girls with full pockets and empty heads—returned home to be greeted thus by her mother,—

"Mrs. L— is queer. The idea of a person of her wealth and position allowing Estelle to associate with the Stevens girls."

"I think as much!" sniffed Blanche, sympathetically. "Estelle cares more for those Stevens girls than for any of us girls,"—meaning by the emphatic "us" the girls in "good society."

Why did Mrs. D— sigh a few days later when her daughter had spoken to her rudely? Could it have been that she began to faintly realize that possibly her course with her beloved Blanche might not be the best and wisest in the world? Had she the dimmest idea that her boasted good society might prove but Dead Sea apples, stale and tasteless when in the future her child might be pining and drooping for juicy and wholesome fruit to stay a weary and much-tried soul?—*Church and Home.*

PHILADELPHIA Record:—It is really worth while for the wage-worker to save, although the process has become so unfashionable among men of fixed incomes that to follow it is regarded almost as a mark of eccentricity. The path to influence and independence for the toiler begins and steadily follows on the line of small economies applied in daily life. Ten years ago, in a Pennsylvania manufacturing town, a machinist went home one evening and said to his wife: "I am tired of this work for others, and we'll turn over a new leaf. I get \$3 a day. Now, we will put away \$10 a week, and live on the rest. If we can't live on it, we'll starve on it." He carried out his determination. In two years he had \$1,000 in bank. With this he began business for himself in a small way, capital was attracted by his energy, and now he is at the head of one of the largest manufacturing concerns in his section, rich, prosperous, and respected. What this man did was nothing of supreme difficulty. A strong, resolute will and a fixed purpose were all that were needed after his determination became fixed.