

ing by the members while the preacher is preaching, there would be much greater results springing out of his pulpit efforts? 'Paul may plant, Apollos water, but God must give the increase.' 'And will not God be inquired of by His people concerning these things?'

A devout, earnest, praying, membership will make even a weak preacher's efforts bring much fruit to the glory of God. For the membership of the Church to forget to ask God to bless the word spoken from the pulpit, is proof conclusive that they are, at heart, indifferent as to the results of the preaching service; and yet God has designed, through the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. Faithful work and good preaching on the part of the pastor are very important, but not less vital to the success of the cause are the devout, earnest prayers of the members of the Church. God does help when His help is devoutly sought by all the people. 'Brethren, don't forget to pray.'—Religious Telescope.

Go Forward Like Abraham.

You have to carry many a cross, but you need them, since God lays them on you. He knows how to select them; it is the fact of their being his selection which disturbs and roots out self-will. Crosses which you picked out and thought well to bear, so far from being crosses and means of death unto self, would be all that was wanted to sustain and strengthen self-will.

You complain of your interior darkness and poverty; 'Blessed are the poor in spirit.' 'Blessed are they who, not having seen, yet have believed.' It is not far enough for us to see if we can perceive our own frailty, and not attempt to palliate it? If we see our own darkness, it will do! There is then no light whereby to indulge a curious disposition, but as much as is needed for mistrusting self, setting self aside, and yielding to others. What would that goodness be worth of which a man was always inwardly conscious, and with which he was satisfied—a mere visible light?

I thank our Lord that he deprives you of so dangerous a stay. Go, like Abraham, 'not knowing whither;' follow the leadings of lowliness, simplicity, and self-denial, and you will acquire peace, recollection, gentleness, detachment, forbearance, toward others, and contentment under all your troubles.—Fenelon.

[For the 'Northern Messenger.'

The Victorian India Orphan Society.

Our last report of most encouraging progress, both intellectually and spiritually, amongst the girls and boys in our Orphanage at Dhar, Central India. Latest letters show a very different aspect of their lives; twenty girls all prostrate with malarial fever; skilful, loving care, and nineteen restored to health; one little one, Chanduli, taken; a sorrow-stricken company of girls, for she was dearly beloved, and this was the first death amongst them for nearly five years. 'Chanduli knew for some days that she would not recover, and she said she wished to go and be with Jesus; two of the older girls took charge of her, one nursing and caring for her during the day, and the other during the night. All the care and attention that love could give being lavished upon her. She was so happy when I was with her, she would reach out her hand to me, and move over in the bed to get closer. I felt her death keenly, all the girls being very dear to me, but could give her to the loving Saviour, who had permitted me to be with her, and teach her about the One who loves the little children.' What an atmosphere of love, and how different such a death to the passing away of the vast numbers who have never even heard the name of Jesus.

Our heartfelt sympathy is with our dear missionaries also in the great loss they have sustained in the sudden illness and death of Mrs. Russell's father, the Rev. Thos. Evans, of Moradabad, a noble and beloved missionary, who has labored in India for fifty-two years.

INDUSTRIAL FUND.

Receipts for this Fund up to Jan. 8th amounted to \$219.75. Many are delaying sending in their subscriptions, hoping by so doing

to make them larger, and we heartily hope they will be very successful in their efforts; when we remember that those we are helping by this fund are 'out-castes' for Christ's sake, it should stimulate our generosity, and besides, it is providing the means of making a decent living for the growing-up boys in our Orphanage, for whom otherwise there is so very little opportunity.

Will contributors kindly give their addresses. The Treasurer regrets being unable to send receipts to a few kind donors because no addresses were given. Contributions to be sent to the Sec. Treasurer of the Victorian India Orphan Society, Mrs. Crichton (A. S.), 142, Langside St., Winnipeg, who will be glad to give any information desired, either about the Orphanage, or this special Industrial Fund, for which we are hoping to raise \$3,000.

On Saying Grace.

There is evidence that the custom of saying grace is prevalent in almost every country, and that it has been universally observed from the very earliest times. Even the savage tribes and the heathens have always expressed in some way their gratitude to the Being who sustains them. By a sacrifice to the gods, or a dedication of meal, or flesh, or wine, they have acknowledged their dependence upon a greater power than themselves for food and life.

Ancient Christian literature clearly shows that the devout strictly observed the custom of blessings, thanksgiving, and prayers before and after meals, and from these early times to our own day many interesting graces have been in use. Good men have exercised their talents in composing forms of grace in prose and verse, for use in public service and in the home; and men who have no claim to goodness, men who know no recognized formula, often make some sign expressive of an inherited instinct.

'There!' exclaims the laborer, as he draws the back of his hand across his mouth, and rises from the table. This leaves much to the imagination, but perhaps it may be taken as a form of thanks.

Another expression of gratitude almost equally laconic, but more to the point, is the 'Thank God' of the busy working man.

In public, and in orthodox households, grace is always said, but with many people the custom is becoming obsolete. Probably the tradition is most carefully guarded by the Scotch and by the Hebrews. Scottish children are taught the graces from the Shorter Catechism, which are fairly long. They have also other forms, short, and to the point, as:

'Bless food
Make good.'

A quaint Scotch grace is:

'Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some there be that want it;
While we hae meat and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be thankit.'

A popular child's grace is:

'Lord, bless the food
Which now I take,
And make me good
For Jesus' sake.'

With the Jews, grace before meals is seldom said, except at a public gathering, or by very orthodox Jews. The grace before meals is as follows:

'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bringeth forth bread from the earth.'

Then a piece of bread is eaten with salt before commencing the meal.

Grace after meals is said in all orthodox houses, and there are two forms—the short and the long. The so-called short grace seems to us exceedingly long, but it is the longer form which is said by the very orthodox.

The Jews have also blessings for various occasions. Before drinking wine, orthodox Jews say:

'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.'

On hearing thunder:

'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of

the Universe, whose strength and might fill the world.'

On seeing a kind and his court:

'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast given of Thy glory to flesh and blood.'

These blessings are always said in Hebrew.

Charles Lamb, in his essay 'Grace before Meat,' says: 'I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day, besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out on a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting or a solved problem. Why have we none for books—those spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton, a grace before Shakespeare, a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the "Fairy Queen?"'

And truly it would seem becoming to give thanks for refreshments of the spirit as well as those of the body.

There are many metrical graces, but the two which are best known and most used at tea-meetings in connection with the different churches date from the middle of the eighteenth century, the hymn before meat being:

'Be present at our table, Lord,
Be here and everywhere adored,
Thy creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee;'

while the modern form of grace after meat is:

'We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,
But more because of Jesu's blood;
Let manna to our souls be given—
The Bread of Life sent down from Heaven.'
—'Good Words.'

No 'Blankits en Coals.'

'On one occasion,' says the Rev. F. B. Meyer, speaking of his Thursday evening services, which are crowded with working men, 'three or four genuine working men waited for me. "Look 'ere, guv'nor," said the spokesman, "is this 'ere to be a blankit en coals bizness?" "No," I answered, "for one reason because I haven't enough money to pay for the blankets and coals." "Thet's all right, guv'nor; then we'll come. On'y, if there wuz blankits and coals, we ain't a-comin', cuz our mates 'ul roast us so!" So that as there was no material benefit to be gained, they came. You will admit, will you not,' continued Mr. Meyer, 'that such men form a splendid ground for the churches to work upon?'

Thinkers.

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The power of the weekly newspaper is acknowledged on all sides, and nowhere is this influence more felt than the smaller centres and country districts that are the strength of our land. The local weekly, while filling a place that no other paper can fill, can yet give only a small fraction of what the large metropolitan paper furnishes, so that in addition to this local weekly, an intelligent family needs something of wider scope and the Montreal 'Weekly Witness' and Canadian 'Homestead' exactly meets this need. 'An independent, fearless and forceful newspaper.' Latest news of the World, Market and Stock Reports, Financial Review, Good Stories, Home Department, Boys' Page, Questions and Answers, valuable departments devoted to farm, garden and allied interests. Something for every member of the family. Advertisements under editorial supervision. A clean, commercial, agricultural and home newspaper. One dollar a year.

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