

HOPE'S QUIET HOUR

POWER WITH GOD

By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him. . . . Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.—Hosea xii., 3-6.

In the text, the prophet is referring to that mysterious scene in the life of Jacob when, in loneliness, there wrestled a Divine Visitant with him. And Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me"; so he won the blessing and called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "I have seen God face to face." His own name was changed on that occasion, to Israel—for he was told that as a prince he exercised prevailing power with God and with men.

People sometimes wonder why their prayers are not answered. Do they pray like that? Do they refuse to let go until they secure the desired blessing? The great secret of success in any enterprise is the determination to win. As the prophet Isaiah says: "Ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

But why should God demand importunity in prayer, when He is more anxious to hear than we to speak, and more desirous to bestow a blessing than we to receive it? Well, it is very evident that He keeps us waiting for our sakes, because He knows how injurious to us prayer would be if it were a magic charm that would instantly give us everything we asked. It is possible to make the school-work of a child so easy and pleasant that he misses his chance of growing strong in mind and soul, and even his body is not braced up by such enervating training. A good and wise father gives his son hard lessons to learn, and rewards him for his diligence by sending him to a school where the lessons are harder still. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask Him." Trust Him, and pray on, though He may seem to disregard your prayer. His apparent silence may be a proof of confidence in you—He sees that you are strong, and treats you accordingly, in order to make you stronger. He is silent in His love, and because of His love.

"God answers prayer: sometimes, when hearts are weak, He gives the very gifts believers seek."

If he is less easy with you, surely that is no reason for discouragement—because He is wrestling with you in order to strengthen faith by exercise. Can He strengthen you in any other way? If you wish to have power—prevailing power—with God and with men, then you must be willing to wrestle "until the breaking of the day." We belong to the Church "Militant"—so fighting is our business.

There is one strange story told of Him who "went about doing good" on this earth many years ago. A poor woman pleaded with Him in agony, pleaded for her child, in unselfish love, and He at first seemed deaf to her appeal, and then spoke words which seemed terribly cold and harsh. The disciples joined their appeal to hers. Surely they were not more eager to hear and to help than He was. It certainly looked like it, it often seems to-day that men are more ready to relieve suffering than God is. And yet our Lord not only answered that passionate prayer—when He saw she would take no refusal—but He also spoke words of wonderful praise: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." We may be very sure that the gain of that torturing delay was very great to her, and it has cheered millions of heartsick souls since.

Perhaps we prayed for years for something much desired, and did our

best all the time to win the coveted blessing which was held just out of reach. What did we gain? Courage, patience, trust, a certainty that God knew best, and many other things. Have you never been surprised to discover that you were thanking God that He had not given you your desire? Yes, even though you may still desire it. The prayer has led you onward and upward, it has kept you from straying from the straight path, it has poured sweetness into your heart and made you strong with a secret strength. Perhaps God has really been giving what you asked, all the time—spiritually—and you can wait for the full gift until after death, when there will be no danger of your spoiling it by handling. Perhaps others have obtained their desires swiftly and easily. Would you change places with them? Your ideal is still an untarnished and glorious vision—just because it is still in God's hands, being kept by Him for you. When we secure a prize, it soon loses its freshness and beauty. The only things that remain for us in absolute perfection, are the things God is holding for us. He loves us so well that He will not allow us to handle them too soon—lest we spoil them. Take another instance. You are, perhaps, forced continually against some besetting sin. It may be some hereditary taint in your blood, which



POPPIES IN THE GRASS.

makes you almost feel that God has treated you hardly. But the very struggle is a help in your upward climb, you can rise higher because of your burden—if you are fighting with the determination of one who has power with God. In the "Ballad of the Angel" a man sees an armed vision cloaked in light, the angel who had led him as he climbed near to God and had helped him all the way. This "angel of his strength" proved to be the "sin he would not sin," the sin he had driven back to hell, and with great blows he had broken his heart.

"lest it might follow, too."

"With trembling hands he threw the door,
Then fell upon his knee.
'Ah, armed vision cloaked in light,
Why do you honor me?'"

"The angel of your strength am I
Who was your sin," quoth she,
'For that you slew me long ago,
My hands have raised you high,
For that you closed my eyes—my eyes"

Are lights to lead you by,
And 'tis my touch shall swing the gates
Of Heaven when you die!"

Just before I began to write to-day, I picked up "The Survey" for May 15th, and found in the opening editorial the statement that true philanthropists of the present day have "a very strong desire to achieve real benefits . . . to conserve not only life, but health and vigor, to make men stronger rather than more com-

fortable." If up-to-date social workers condemn the short-sighted salving over of deep-rooted sores (which relieves present distress only to make the trouble worse in the future) as sentimental and unscientific "charity"—so-called—why should we expect God to work in surface fashion?

Difficulties, failures, even sins are capable of giving us more power—if they are fought and conquered. As for the darkness of "Religious Doubt," we can gather strength and peace if we do not submit to its misery, but struggle through it to the light. If you have never known the darkness of doubt, then your faith has not yet proved its power. Even the Son of God passed through the blackness of great darkness, feeling Himself forsaken on the Cross, yet He still cried "My God, My God!" Pray on, as He did, and you will surely have power with God, finding that He always—yes, ALWAYS—answers the true and earnest prayers of His loving and obedient children in the way that is wisest and best for them.

"Noble souls, through dust and heat,
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger;
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer."

DORA FARNCOMB.

BIRDALONE

(Edward Sydney Tylee, in the "Spectator," London.)

There grows a thorn by Avonside,
And there my birdie built her nest.

You only sang for her and me!
And ere your nestlin's wings were grown
The nestlin' of my heart was free.

INGLE NOOK

INGLE NOOK NEWS NOTES.

A reader who sends a letter to be forwarded to Bella Coola, says: "I have been an interested reader of the Ingle Nook for a long time and have had many helps thereon. I have never yet got courage enough to write but may some time." In the words of the poet, "let it be soon."

J. D. R., Sask.—The poem had been already supplied by another reader, but your kindness is quite as much appreciated. We should like to hear from you again.

In Need of Help who wrote about a boy in the May 19th issue has got one, and so far both seem to be very well satisfied with the new arrangement. Good luck and happiness to both of them!

I do hope that any of the Ingle Nook members and friends who come to the city this summer will have time to look me up at the ADVOCATE office. There's always a welcome in my den.

MUSIC FOR EVERYBODY.

Do you play? Do you sing? Are the children taking lessons? Then you want to add to your collection of vocal and instrumental selections. Get one new subscriber to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE at \$1.50 per year, and you can choose any three of the folios described on page 883 of this issue.

A HELPFUL LETTER

Dear Dame Durden,—It is some time since I've written to our corner, but I've been on the sick list and have added another to our little circle. So that now I could sign myself, like one of the other members, "Mother of Four."

When I was a wee bit of a girl, I used to be very fond of climbing trees, but I never could get down again by myself, and now I'm "grown up" I find myself "up a tree" again, and I want help down. Perhaps some of the loungers in the cosy corner could help me. Whatever can I do to get the lime coating out of a kettle? If anyone knows, I'll be grateful if they'll tell me. This country is blessed (?) with alkali water. We have a well of clear, cold, tasteless water, but my kettles get so heavy with the coating. Indeed, I had to throw away a really good one, for the spout filled right up. I had quite an experience cooking beans with this water; after soaking them all night, it used to take nearly all day to cook them soft, but I found out that adding a half spoon of soda to the water made them cook thoroughly in less than two hours without previous soaking. I thought I might past on this hint, for a number of us in the corner have to use this kind of water.

I wonder if any of the busy mothers have tried using red tablecloths instead of white. When the men have such dusty work to do, and there are little children, it is hard to make a white cloth last more than two days, and they are so hard to wash, starch and iron. I didn't care for the red ones much at first, but I dressed up the table with plenty of mats and tray cloths, and they save so much work that now I'm in love with them. Why, if they are hung nicely on the line, they don't even need to be ironed, and they look quite cosy in the winter. Some use just oilcloth, but I must have a tablecloth.

We have another little idea here to save work and appearance. I have a deep-seated aversion to a swill-pail in a kitchen; so instead, we put a big barrel in the cellar, and the chop for the pigs is put into this. Then we cut a hole in the kitchen floor, right at the baseboard, and ran a two-inch lead pipe down into the

Oh! I've a-wandered far and wide,
But still that music breaks my rest.
Ne'er came a sweeter nightingale
To whistle to a greener spring,
In those lost hours in Avon Vale
That were so light upon the wing.
Lost, lost and gone, zweet Birdal-
lone!
The songs I loved, the nest I
knew.
She made my very heart her own,
And took it with her when she
flew.

Far down, far down on Avonside,
When summer plimmed the mowen
grass,
Wi' little Phoebe Fern beside,
Droo steamen fields my feet would
pass;
Till by the snowy hawthorn trees
We stayed our rustling steps for
fear,
While forth upon the scented breeze
Rang the vurst notes, so zweet and
clear.
Ah! silver clear, zweet Birda-
lone!
The silver fluting notes we heard,
And Phoebe's hand upon my own
For fear I scared the tiny bird!

Sing low, sing low on Avonside,
Low warble to the whispering
stream!

The birds return wi' zummertide,
But not the music of my dream.
They come a-courting spring again,
They pipe and whistle as they will,
But I have sought one nest in vain:
The bird is fled, the song is still.
For ever still, zweet Birdal-
lone!