

any place another year, but I reckon I'll have to let him stay. They are farming right clean to the fence-corners.'

The sunflowers brightened the little yard wonderfully, and the bees found pasture there in the dull time after sourwood and chestnut dropped their white blossoms.

Better than all, Priscilla had an interest that connected her with the outside world; and Miss Brown, having learned something of the various kinds of poverty that surrounded her, knew better how to reach her starved soul. Priscilla never became an eloquent member of the society, but she gained something better for her than eloquence.

But the best thing came late in summer. A young extension worker came from a school in the edge of the mountains to Lickburg, with a commission from a rich, eccentric old lady to find a mountain girl poor enough actually to need help in getting an education. He applied to Miss Brown for advice, and she told him of Priscilla and her sunflowers.

'She is the girl,' said he.

Martha, the second of Green Gorby's numerous daughters, was old enough to take Priscilla's place as chief baby-tender and general manager in the home, and she also assumed the responsibility of harvesting and marketing the sunflower seeds. Priscilla, with one good calico dress for every day, which she washed out on Saturdays, and another for Sunday, went out into the great world beyond the mountains. The eccentric old lady would have kept her in school for several years; but the sense of responsibility fostered by her lifelong caring for her younger brothers and sisters made Priscilla think of others, and at the end of the year she asked that the lady's bounty might be transferred to Martha. The sunflower farmer came home in the spring, and found work as Miss Brown's office assistant. Her intimate acquaintance with the mountain people made her a valuable home-missionary assistant, too. Out of gratitude for all that came to her with the blossoming of her sunflowers, she has used her few talents in helping other people to make the most of their fence-corners, and her neighbors' children have risen up to call her blessed.

The Message of the Master at Prayer.

(J. R. Miller, D.D., in the 'Sunday-School Times.')

When General Gordon was with his army in Khartoum it is said that there was an hour every day when a white handkerchief lay over his tent door. While that signal was there no one, however high his rank, ever approached the tent. The most urgent business waited outside. Everyone knew that Gordon was at prayer within the tent, and not a man nor an officer came near until the handkerchief was lifted away.

There is always a sacredness about prayer. We instantly withdraw if unawares we suddenly come upon one engaged in prayer. We are awed into reverence when we see any one, however humble, bowing in prayer. But the sight of Christ at prayer touches us with still deeper awe. We uncover our heads, and take off our shoes, and stand afar off in reverent hush while he bows before his Father and communes with him. Yet no figure is more familiar in the Gospels than the Master at prayer.

It brings Christ very near to us to see him in this holy posture. We think of him as the Son of God, as having in himself all power, all blessing, all comfort, and all divine ful-

ness, and as not needing to ask even his Father for anything. But when he became man he accepted all our life. He lived as we must live. He was dependent on God, as we are, for help, for strength, for deliverance in temptation, for all blessing and good. He prayed as we do, pleading earnestly as he taught us to do. When we think how completely and fully Jesus entered into all our life of trust and dependence we get a vivid impression of his closeness to us. And if he, the Son of man, who knew no sin, who was also Son of God, needed to pray so continually how can any of us, weak, sinful, needy, with empty lives, get along without prayer?

In a sense, Jesus was always at prayer. His communion with God was never interrupted for a moment. One of Paul's exhortations is, 'Pray without ceasing.' Our Lord fulfilled this ideal. He was not always on his knees. He passed most of his days in exhausting service. But in all his ministry of love he never ceased to pray.

He was not always asking favors of his Father. That is the only kind of praying some people know anything about. They pray only when they are in trouble, and want to be helped out of it. But that is a very small part of true prayer. We want to be with our own friends as much as we can. Though we have no request to make of them, we like to talk with them of things in which we are both of us interested, or even to sit in silence without speech.

'Rather, as friends sit sometimes hand in hand,

Nor mar with words the sweet speech of their eyes;

So in soft silence let us oftener bow,
Nor try with words to make God understand.
Longing is prayer; upon its wings we rise
To where the breath of heaven beats upon
our brow.'

Some friends wanted to know how the holy Bengel prayed, and watched him at his devotions one night. He opened his New Testament and read slowly and silently, very often pausing in meditation, or as if listening to the voice of gentle stillness. There was a glow in his features, and frequently he would look up as if he saw a face his watchers could not see. Thus an hour passed. He had not once been on his knees, nor had he been heard to utter a word. Then he closed the book, saying only, 'Dear Lord Jesus, we are on the same old terms,' and went to his bed. That was truest prayer. That is what it is to pray without ceasing,—to be always near enough to God to talk with him, always to be drinking in his love even in our busiest hours.

But, while Jesus prayed thus without ceasing, there were many occasions of special prayer in his life. Again and again he went apart from men to be alone with God. He spent whole nights in communion beneath the silent stars.

'Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of thy prayer.'

It will be interesting to notice some of the occasions on which Jesus prayed. The first of these was at the time of his baptism. Whatever else his baptism meant, it was his consecration to the work of his Messiahship. He knew what it involved. He saw the cross yonder, but he voluntarily entered on his course of love and sacrifice. As he was being baptized he prayed, and the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him. His praying that hour showed his desire for the divine anointing to prepare him for his great work.

This example of Jesus teaches us to seek

divine blessing as we begin our life work, also as we enter any new calling, as we accept any new responsibility. People sometimes forget that they need divine anointing for what they call secular work. They want God's Spirit to help them in their religious duties, but they do not suppose they need heavenly anointing for a business life, or a professional life, or for the task-work of their common days. Yet there is nothing we have to do, however, unspiritual it may seem, in the doing of which we do not need the help of the Holy Spirit. power to control men or see how they control

The last prayer of Jesus was, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' Thus his spirit went forth on the wings of prayer into his Father's bosom. So it shall be with us, his friends, when we come to the edge of the great mystery, and cannot see the way. Dying, for a Christian, is but flying away from earth's passing things to be with God forever.

The Great for the Little.

In New York city, not long ago, a man lost his way through his own folly. A fire started in his flat at night. Some one, hearing the crackling of the flames, awoke him and his wife. In a few minutes the air-shaft was in a blaze.

When the firemen reached the burning house they were surprised to find a man struggling to escape from the arms of his wife. He was determined to go back into the flames to save some papers relating to his ancestors. The firemen soon forced him out of the house into safety.

A little later another squad of firemen, while pulling the hose through the scuttle in the roof, found the foolish man near his flat, lying upon the floor, his clothes burned off his back. In his hands were some scorched papers. He had secured his papers, but he had lost his life.

A young man who had graduated with fair honors at the law school, obtained a good position with one of the great law firms of the city. Whether he turned out a forensic genius or not, provided he paid faithful attention at the office, he was sure of promotion, standing and success. Feeling sure of his position he began to be careless. He left the office early in the afternoon to play a little game of cards with his friends. Sometimes he played until late at night, and the next morning he came to the office tired and cross.

The habit grew. His friends expostulated with him, but he said that he would not give up his freedom to amuse himself for the tiresome drudgery of any law office in the land. In six months the head of the firm dismissed him. He had made his choice between work and play, and had deliberately given up the great for the little, the permanent for the ephemeral. His degraded future was easily foretold.

A boy twelve years old was asked, 'Why don't you go to school?'

'I don't want to; I don't have no fun.'

'Don't your parents want you to go? Don't you care to learn? Don't you want to be something more than a loafer?'

The boy was bright, and for a moment he hung his head; but he had tasted the freedom that makes tramps and loafers, and that fills workhouses and prisons.

'I don't want to go to school, an' I hate to work,' he answered, in a shame-faced way.

Only a few weeks later he was arrested for theft, and put on probation in a reform school, where he is now. Young as he is, he has made his choice between the great and the little, he is doomed to a life of infamy.

To every person the choice comes. By many a soul it has to be met daily. 'Shall I sacrifice my future to a moment's play or fun? Shall I imperil my soul for an hour's amusement?'—Youth's Companion.