

sure observed hearing his children their catechism and hymns, while sewing away at his last; and a mother of a family I remember, always kept in her pocket some good little book, which she could look at a minute or two while she was feeding her babe, or lulling it to sleep.

These examples show what may be done by trying; and, at least, no one should say he has no time for good thoughts, who can find time to admit a thought of vanity and folly. Even in the midst of bustle and noise, it is not quite impossible to raise a secret thought in prayer. Nehemiah, when handing the cup to the king at the royal feast, felt his heart full of care and distress, and said, "So I prayed to God of Heaven." We should imitate him. Or, like Zaccheus, we may climb the sycamore tree, and get a sight of Jesus. Prayer can find its way to God above the heads of the crowd. A penitent believing heart is always in a fit place and frame for prayer; and believing prayer is sure to turn the promises of God into performances.—The mind of man is never so ready to pray, but God is still more ready to give. Melancthon the great reformer, said, "Trouble and perplexity compel me to pray; and prayer drives away perplexity and trouble."

### Cause of Barrenness.

[God will never give his glory to another, and however his servants may excel in ability and zeal, unless they recognize their dependence on his blessing, and cry humbly and fervently for the holy spirit to follow their efforts, and crown them with success, they need expect no good. The *American Messenger* illustrates this as follows:—]

'I don't see why there are no conversions in our Sabbath-school,' said Mr. Mills to his wife, as they sat with their little family around the tea-table one Sabbath evening.

'I am sure the school has never been more prosperous than since you took the charge of it,' she replied; 'it has nearly doubled its numbers, and you have secured a very capable set of teachers; and have given them the example of great punctuality in attendance.

'Well, I have not been absent from my post one Sabbath during the year. The teachers and scholars are faithful and prompt in their attendance; the lessons are well-studied; and to a stranger the school would appear all that could be wished.—But I cannot feel that we are realizing the results of our labor, unless we see the dear children and youth coming to Christ.—Good seed has been sown; but it does not spring up and bear fruit as I expected. I am puzzled to account for it.'

'Papa,' said little Charlie, who had listened only to the last sentence of the conversation, 'hasn't your seed come up?'

'No, my child.'

'Was the seed good, papa?'

'Yes, Charlie, the very best.'

'Was it sowed in the spring when the ground was tender, papa?'

'It certainly was, my son.'

Charlie paused a moment, and thought. He had a little garden which he called his own. His father had prepared the ground, and given him a few choice seeds, and told him how to take care of them. The little boy had followed his father's directions, and was now rejoicing in the success of his labor. Hence his earnest question and his thoughtful brow. But he was not long in solving the puzzle to his own satisfaction.

'O, papa,' at length he said, '*you have not watered enough.*' When I planted my garden you told me my seed was good, and if I sowed it when the ground was tender, and watered it well, it would come up.—And when we had that dry time last June, you said I must water it every day, and I did. It must be, papa, that *you haven't watered yours enough.*'

'Charlie is right,' said his father, to whom the artless words of his little boy had brought a needed reproof; 'I have sown good seed in my garden, it is true; but I have relied too much upon the quality of the seed, and the favorable circumstances of the planting, and have sadly neglected to water it with tears of earnest supplication. Even the precious seed of divine truth, though sown in the spring time of life in the tender heart of childhood and youth, will not spring up unless watered by the Spirit in answer to fervent prayer. Henceforth, God helping me, I