

GOD BLESS MOTHER.

A little child with flaxen hair,
 And sunlit eyes so sweet and fair,
 Who kneels, when twilight darkens all,
 And from those loving lips there fall
 The accents of this simple prayer:
 "God bless!—God bless my mother!"

A youth upon life's threshold wide,
 Who leaves a gentle mother's side,
 Yet keeps, enshrined within his breast,
 Her words of warning—still the best:
 And whispers, when temptation tried:
 "God bless!—God bless my mother!"

A white-haired man who gazes back
 Along life's weary, furrowed track,
 And sees one face—an angel's now!
 Hears words of light that led aright
 And prays, with reverential brow:
 "God bless!—God bless my mother!"

—*Brooklyn Magazine.*

TESTING A PRAYING SOLDIER.

There are many ways of testing Christians, and some of these are not very accurate. The following incident brings out one which can never fail in the circumstances. It took place during the American Revolutionary War, when the strictest order was required to be kept, and when care was needed to be taken lest the enemy should get an advantage.

One night near the British camp, not far from the river Hudson, a Highland soldier was caught creeping stealthily back to his quarters out of the woods. He was taken before the commanding officer and charged with holding communication with the enemy. The case of Major Andre was then very recent, and no Briton was disposed to be merciful toward a suspected friend of the Americans. The poor Highlander pleaded that he had only gone into the woods to pray by himself. This was his only defence.

The commanding officer was himself a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, but he felt no tenderness for the culprit.

"Have you been in the habit, sir, of

spending hours in private prayer?" he asked sternly.

"Yes, sir."

"Then down on your knees and pray now," thundered the officer; "you never before had such need of it."

Expecting immediate death, the soldier knelt and poured out his soul in a prayer that for aptness, and simple, expressive eloquence could have been inspired only by the piety of a Christian.

"You may go," said the officer, when he had done. "I believe your story. If you had not been often at drill you couldn't have got on so well at review."

And the poor soldier saved his life by proving himself to have practised habitual communication with God.

BEGINNING AND ENDING.

The beginning:

A schoolboy, ten years old, one lovely June day—with the roses in full bloom over the porch, and the laborers in the wheat fields—had been sent by his Uncle John to pay a bill at the country store, and there was seventy-five cents left, and Uncle John did not ask him for it.

At noon this boy had stood under the beautiful blue sky, and a great temptation came—He said to himself, "Shall I give it back? or shall I wait till he asks for it? If he never asks, that is his lookout. If he does, why, I can give it back again." He never gave back the money.

The ending:

Ten years went by; he was a clerk in a bank. A package of bills lay in the drawer, and had not been put in the safe. He saw them, wrapped them up in his coat, and carried them home. He is now in a prison cell; but he set his feet that way when a boy, years before, when he sold his honesty for seventy-five cents.

That night he sat disgraced, and an open criminal. Uncle John was long ago dead. The old home was desolate, the mother broken-hearted. The prisoner knew what brought him there.—*Scl.*