

Blue Monday at the Parsonage.

A BIT OF TRUE HISTORY BY THE PARSON'S WIFE.

The kettle kept singing a mournful song while the parson's wife scoured vigorously at a burnt saucepan. The little maid had gone off to a wedding, the children had taken their lunch to school, and the house was empty and lonely. But what made it hardest—so the parson's wife thought—was a low singing that came floating down the back stairway from the study. "Jesus, keep me near the cross" were the words the parson kept singing over and over again, until finally a tear dropped on the saucepan, now quite bright from the feeling scouring which the parson's wife had given it. And still the parson kept on singing.

The little woman could stand it no longer, so she crept quietly up the back stairs, and along the hall to the study door. By this time the singing had ceased. Creeping softly inside the door, the "mistress of the manse" saw the parson with his head bowed on his desk, as if in utter despair. Her indignation and pity blended and burst forth in a bitter tirade:

"Well, I think you of all people don't need to ask the Lord to keep you near the cross. You've got plenty right here in your own church who are most mighty capable along that line." She stood a moment, but he never lifted his head, and no sound issued from his lips. She crept softly over to his side and laid her head caressingly upon his shoulder. As she did so she noticed his brown hair thickly sprinkled with gray. "Why, dear," she went on less sharply, "you're growing old, even while you are still young in years. Give it all up, take that offer of Dr. Tucker's, and let us go out where we will neither care nor be cared for."

He took her hand for a moment, and, pressing it warmly, said, "Leave me alone, dear, just a little longer."

She went down to her work, and swept the rooms so vigorously that, had the carpets been able to speak, they would have cried out in pain. Meantime her tears kept pace with her broom.

Lunch time came. She set the table with unusual care, made an appetizing dish she knew her husband liked, rang the bell, and waited.

In ten minutes he appeared, his whole attitude one of utter despair. They seated themselves at the table, and he dropped his head and uttered these words: "Lord, we thank thee for the cross. Keep us near it, for thy name's sake. Amen."

Her soul was ablaze. "Now see here," she said, "I told you upstairs that the cross is not what you need to pray for. If you haven't enough of a cross, I don't know who has. You do three times the work of the average preacher. You go to your teacher's meeting, and two or three teachers are there out of twenty-two. At prayer-meeting generally about nine of the faithful appear, and there should be at least seventy-five. You work hard sixteen hours a day, seven days in the week, forty-eight weeks in the year. You visit, you go to all the graduations of all the boys and girls who graduate, you attend all the public meetings of any concern to this entire community, you teach in Sunday school, preach twice, lecture Wednesday night, and you haven't one soul to step forward and say, 'Here, let me take prayer-meeting this week; you're tired.' You work ten times harder than Thomas or Ritchey or any of those fellows, and you do it because you love the Lord."

Still she went on. "You can get at the very least three thousand dollars a year in Tucker's work. Why are you singing that prayer, and even making it your note of thanksgiving at the table?" Her heart seemed bursting, and she must say what was in her mind, so she kept on. "Now see here. I work just as hard as you do, accordingly. I haven't the brains you have, but I have the will. Let's throw up the whole thing. Why, here you are worn out, and not forty years old, and I'll never be fat, fair and forty under the present regime. I work night and day to keep our clothes decent. I prepare missionary addresses that fall like water on a duck's back, so far as visible effect is seen. I get up programs and temperance articles. I circulate Mormon petitions and mercy pledges. I send out circular letters on our missionary work, invite persons to each meeting, but no new ones come. I

do everything in my power except hire a block and tackle to drag the women in, and everything fails. Now you know we can together make over four thousand dollars a year, and live at least half-way decent, and I'm in favor of tossing the whole thing aside and quitting."

"Man shall not live by bread alone," said her husband. "He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." Still he continued, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," and "Even as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

The lash was too much. Her head dropped on her hand, and tears trickled through the fingers which hid her face from his.

He rose and softly stole upstairs. She put away the untasted food, fixed the room, and began to do some mending.

Again came the strains of the old hymn, "Jesus, keep us near the cross." He took her in now. The tears fell until it was useless to try to sew. She bowed her head upon her hands, and prayed too.

All grew quiet above. She took up a book and tried to read, but his sad face kept coming between her and the page. She rose and went up to the study door. Standing outside a moment, she heard him sing softly that old, old hymn, "Jesus, I my cross have taken All to leave and follow thee."

She knew she could not sing that yet, so she sat down on the floor and prayed. He kept on, singing the whole hymn twice. As he started for the third time on the line, "Jesus, I my cross have taken," she joined him in broken tones.

With a bound he sprang to the door and opened it. Holding out his hands he said, "Are you willing, dear, to take up the old cross again, all the weary days and nights, all the trials and discouragements and criticisms for Christ's sake?"

With a sob she said, "Yes, we'll try it all once more." Drawing her to a chair, they knelt and laid every burden, every care, every negligent and fault-finding one, every trial, at the feet of Christ, and she then went back to the mending of socks, and he to his mending of souls. Soon another hymn came floating down the stairs:

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee,
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me."

And she joined, her soul filled with peace. She no longer grieved over hours of seemingly worthless toil, for she knew now as never before that the burden was not her own, but the dear Lord's.—Sunday School Times.

Lift Your Eyes.

A Scotch peasant and his wife emigrated to Canada, cleared a bit of forest, built their log cabin, and sowed their crops in the small clearing. One evening when the husband returned from his work in the woods, he found his wife sitting on the doorstep weeping bitterly.

"What's wrang wi' ye, my woman?" he asked.

"Oh, if you are straightened in your life if your outlook is narrow and dispiriting, look up! Look up to the New Jerusalem to your future home, to your coming destiny. There is always room to see up—a great world of thought and blessing in which your soul can dwell."

"I cannot see out," she answered.

"No he replied, with sympathy in his voice, "but you can see up." and he pointed her to the circle of heaven that like a great blue eye looked down upon her from above.

John Wesley.

"In 1729 my brother Charles and I, reading the Bible, saw we could not be saved without holiness, followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737 we saw that this holiness comes by faith. In 1738 we saw likewise that men are justified before they are sanctified."

"You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification, but I have known and taught it above these twenty years. I have continually testified for these five and twenty years in private and in public, that we are sanctified, as well as justified, by faith. Within five weeks from within our band received the second blessing."

"This morning one found peace, one the 'second blessing.'"

"Insist ever on the instant received now by the instantaneous blessing."

"Let all our preaching make a point of preaching perfection believers, constantly, strongly, exply."

"If you speak only and indirectly none will be offended and none profited; but if you speak, although some will probably be ay, yet others will soon find the power God unto salvation."

"Many years since saw without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I began by following after and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years later, God gave me a clearer view than I'd before of the way how to attain it—nely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, 'we are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith this I testified in private, in public, in print, and God confirmed it by a thound witnesses.'—Vol. 9, p. 38.

Mother's Prayer.

The universal and unailing expression of a mother's love found in a mother's prayers. Everything else may fail, but while reason hold her throne these fail not. Was there ever a prayerless mother? Was there ever one who bent above the cradle of her loved one without a prayer? or pressed to her bosom her darling child without an uttered or unuttered longing for a blessing on its head? And when the years go by, and youth and health and strength are gone, when the mothers weary hands have forgotten their cunning, and her feet can no more journey to and fro on errands of affection, still her prayers go up by night and day for the blessing of God upon the children He has given her. They may go from her presence. Swept by the tides of business, or breaking from the restraints of home, her sons may wander as prodigals in far off distant lands, and her daughters may forsake the guide of their youth and forget the covenant of their God; but out of sight, out of hearing, and beyond the circle of her knowledge, beyond the reach of everything but God and prayer, she follows them still. In distant lands, on storm tossed vessels, in deserts and in dens of sin and shame, the mother cannot forget her children, her prayers still rise and reach the ear of God.

Said a young man not a christian, when living in a large city: "If mothers only understood how their prayers for their poor foolish sons hold the wild boys back from so many sins, and were all the time drawing these sons away from ruin, if mothers could only understand it all, I tell you they would keep at it." And they do keep at it, though sometimes they may hope against hope: and though perhaps even then the mother of that son may have been mourning that she had lost all influence over her boy.

The memory of a mother's prayers and the recollection of her gentle hand laid upon his childish head, held back John Randolph from the paths of infidelity and sin. A little boy nine years of age passing by his mother's door heard her speak his name in earnest prayer before God. He thought within himself, my mother is more anxious that I should be saved than I am for my own salvation. That hour witnessed his decision to serve the Lord; and through a life of remarkable usefulness, Samuel Budgett was the witness of the efficacy of that mother's prayers.

Ye praying mothers, take courage; your sighs have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, your prayers ascend the heavenly throne. You may never live to see your wayward ones returning from their wanderings, but God liveth and heareth prayer; and your petitions, lodged upon heaven's altar, may be answered after the heart that indited them ceases to throb, and the lips that poured them forth are lushed in the silence of the grave. Time is too short to measure the power of a mother's supplications. The mighty power of everlasting years alone can reap the harvest of that harvest withers, watered with the dew of the garner of our

What She Could.

"I imagine," says Moody, "when Mary died, if God had sent an angel to write her epitaph, He couldn't have done better than to put over her grave what Christ said: 'She hath done what she could.' I would rather have that said over my grave, if it could honestly be said, than have all the wealth of Rothschilds. Christ raised a monument to Mary that is more lasting than the monuments raised to Caesar or Napoleon. Their monuments crumble away, but hers endures. Her name never appeared in print while she was on earth, but to day it is famous in three hundred and fifty languages. We may never be great, we may never be known outside of our circle of friends, but we may, like Mary, do what we can! May God help each of us to do what we can! Life will soon be over it is short at the longest. Let us rise and follow in the steps of Mary of Bethany." Sel.

Prayer.

Go not, my friend, into the dangerous world without prayer. You kneel down at night to pray, and drowsiness weighs down your eyelids; a hard day's work is a kind of excuse, and you shorten your prayer, and resign yourself softly to repose. The morning breaks, and it may be you rise late, and so your early devotions are not done or are done in irregular haste. No watching unto prayerful wakefulness once more omitted; and now is that repairable! We solemnly believe not. There has been that done which cannot be undone. You have given up your prayer, and you will suffer for it. Temptation is before you, and you are not ready to meet it. There is a guilty feeling on the soul, and you linger at a distance from God. It is no marvel if that day in which you suffer drowsiness to interfere with prayer be a day in which you shrink from duty. Moments of prayer intruded on by sloth cannot be recovered. We may get experience, but we cannot get back the rich moments which were wrapped up in prayer.—Frederick

Bad Bargain.

A Sabbath school teacher observed that he who bargains, and inquires, collected an instance of one making a bad bargain. "I do," replied a boy, "I made a bad bargain when I sold my soul for a mess of pottage."

A second said, "I made a bad bargain when I sold my soul for gain when he sold pieces of silver."

A third replied, "I made a bad bargain when I sold my soul for land and then I sold about it."

A fourth observed that he makes a bad bargain when he sells his soul for the whole world, Children's Friend.

The Master kept his servants by so much with His love that they were not be unloving thoughts that be un-Christlike. ing before the Lord, and if they were pouring out the abundance of their hearts, speaketh.

Ah, pray before Christ have passed through church and slurring for a your head in all seasons of candor. in peace?

"Much into trouble."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Golden Keys.

A bunch of golden keys is mine, To make each day with gladness shine. "Good morning" that's the golden key That unlocks every day for me. When evening comes, "Good night I say, And close the door of each glad day. When at the table, "If you please!" I take from off my bunch of keys. When friends do anything for me I use the little "Thank you!" key. "Excuse me!" "Beg your pardon!" too, When by mistake some harm I do; Or, if unkindly harm I've given, With "Forgive me!" I shall be forgiven. On a golden ring these keys I'll bind; This is its motto, "Be ye kind!" I'll often use each golden key And then a child polite I'll be.

No "If."

There was a knock at the door of Aunt Fanny's pleasant kitchen one morning, and on the steps stood a little girl with a basket on her arm.

"Don't you want to buy something?" she asked as she came in. "Here are some nice home-knit stockings." "Surely you did not knit these stockings yourself little girl!" said Aunt Fanny.

"No, ma'am; but grandma did. She is lame, and so she sits still and knits the things, and I run about to sell them; that's the way we get along. She says we are partners and so I wrote out a sign and put it over the fire-place. 'Grandma and Maggie.'"

Aunt Fannie laughed and bought the stockings, and as she counted out the money to pay for them Maggie said; "This will buy the bread and butter for supper."

"What if you had not sold anything?" asked Aunt Fanny.

"You see, we pray for our daily bread."