THE LORD'S RAZOR.

BY REV. T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

"In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the King of Assyria."—Isaiah vii. 20.

The Bible is the boldest book ever written. There are no similitudes in Ossian or the Iliad or the Odyssey so daring. Its imagery sometimes seems on the verge of the reckless, but only seems so. The fact is that God would startle and arouse and propel men and nations. A tame and limping similitude would fail to accomplish the object. While there are times when he employs in the Bible the gentle dew and the morning cloud and the dove and the daybreak in the presentation of truth, we often find the iron chariot, the lightning, the earthquake, the spray, the sword, and, in my text, the razor.

This keen-bladed instrument has advanced in usefulness with the ages. In Bible times and lands the beard remained uncut save in the seasons of mourning and humiliation, but the razor was always

A SUGGESTIVE SYMBOL.

David says of Doeg, his antagonist: "Thy tongue is a sharp razor working deceitfully;" that is, it pretends to clear the face, but is really used for deadly incision. In this morning's text this weapon of the toilet appears under the following circumstances: Judea needed to have some of its prosperities cut off, and God sends against it three Assyrian kings—first Sennacherib, then Esdraddon, and afterwards Nebuchadnezzar. These three sharp invasions, that cut down the glory of Judea, are compared to so many sweeps of the razor across the face of the land. And these circumstances were called a hired r zor because God took the kings of Assyria, with whom he had no sympathy, to do the work, and paid them in palaces and spoils and annexations. These kings were hired to execute the divine behests. And now the text, which on its first reading may have seemed trivial or inapt, is ch rged with momentous import: "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired—namely, by them beyond the river, by the King of Assyria."

NOT A TOY.

Well, if God's judgments are razors, we had better be careful how we use them on other people. In careful sheaths these domestic weapons are put away, where no one by accident may touch them, and where the hands of children may not reach them. Such instruments must be carefully handled or not handled at all. But how recklessly some people wield the judgments of God! If a man meet with business misfortune, how many there are ready to cry out: "That is a judgment of God upon him because he was unscrupulous, arrogant, or over-reaching, or miserly. I thought he would get cut down! What a clean sweep of everything! His city house and country house gone. His stables emptied of the fine bays and sorrels and grays that used to prance by his door. All his resources overthrown, and all that he prided himself on tumbled into demolition. Good for him!" Stop, my brother. Don't sling around too freely the judgments of God, for they are razors.

DISASTER NOT PUNISHMENT

Some of the most wicked business men succeed and they live and die in prosperity, and some of the most honest and conscientious are driven into bankruptcy. Perhaps his manner was unfortunate, and he was not really as proud as he looked to be. Some of those who carry their heads erect and look imperial are humble as a child, while many a man in seedy coat and slouch hat and unblacked shoes is as proud as Lucifer. You cannot tell by a man's look. Perhaps he was not unscrupulous in business, for there are two sides to every story, and everybody that accomplishes anything for himself or others gets industriously lied about. Perhaps his business misfortune was not a punishment, but the fatherly discipline to prepare him for heaven, and God may love him far more than he loves you, who can pay dollar for dollar, and are put down in the commercial catalogues as A1. Whom the Lord loveth he gives four hundred thousand dollars and lets die on embroidered pillows? No; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Better keep your hand off the Lord's razors, lest they cut and wound people that do not deserve it. If you want to shave off some of the bristling pride of your own heart, do so; but be very careful how you put the sharp edge on others.

How I do dislike the behavior of those persons who, when people are unfortunate, say: "I told you so—getting punished—served him right." If those I-told-you-so's got their desert they would long ago have been pitched over the battlements. The mote in their neighbor's eyes, so small that it takes a microscope to find it, gives them more trouble than the beam which obscures their own optics. With air sometimes supercilious and sometimes Pharisaical, and always blasphemous, they take the razor of divine judgment and sharpen it on the hone of their own hard hearts, and then go to work on men sprawled out at full length under disaster, cutting mercilessly. They begin by soft expressions of sympathy and pity and half-praise, and lather the victim all over before they put on the sharp edge.

A CAPTIVE KING.

Let us be careful how we shoot at others lest we take down the wrong one, remembering the servant of King William Rufus who shot a deer, but the arrow glanced against a tree and killed the king. Instead of going out with shafts to pierce, and razors to cut, we had better imitate the friend of Richard Cœur de Loin, who, in the war of the Crusades, was captured and imprisoned, but none of his friends knew where. So his loyal friend went around the land from stronghold to stronghold, and sang at each window a snatch of song that Richard Cœur de Lion had taught him in other days. And one day coming before a jail where he suspected his king might be incarcerated, he sang two lines of song, and immediately King Richard responded from his cell with the other two lines, and so his whereabouts were discovered, and immediately a successful movement was made for his liberation. So let us go up and down the world with the music of kind words and sympathetic hearts, serenading the unfortunate, and trying to get out of trouble men who had noble natures, but by unforseen circumstances have been incarcerated, thus liberating kings. More hymn book and less razor.

TO THE FAULTY.

Especially ought we to be apologetic and merciful toward those who, while they have great faults, have also great virtues. Some people are barren of virtues. No weeds verily, but no flowers. I must not be too much enraged at the nettle along the fence if it be in a field containing forty acres of ripe Michigan wheat. At the present time naturalists tell us there is on the sun a spot twenty thousand miles long, but from the brightness and warmth I conclude it is a good deal of a sun yet.

A PRECISE IMPLEMENT.

Again, when I read in my text that the Lord shaves with the hired razor of Assyria the land of Judea, I bethink myself of the precision of God's providence. A razor swung the tenth part of an inch out of the right line means either failure or laceration, but God's dealings never slip, and they do not miss, by the thousandth part of an inch, the right direction. People talk as though things in this world were at loose ends. Cholera sweeps across Marseilles and Madrid and Palermo, and we watch anxiously. Will the epidemic sweep Europe and America? People say, "That will entirely depend on whether the inoculation is a successful experiment; that will depend entirely on quarantine regulations; that will depend on the early or late appearance of frost; that epidemic is pitched into the world, and it goes blundering across the continents, and it is all guess work, an appalling perhaps."

My friends, I think, perhaps, that God had something to do with it, and that his mercy may have done as much for us as the quarantine and the health officers. It was right and a necessity that all caution should be used, but there has come enough macaroni, from Italy, and enough grapes from the South of France, and enough rags from tatterdemalions, and hidden in these articles of transportation enough cholera germs to have left by this time all Brooklyn mourning at Greenwood, and all Philadelphia at Laurel Hill, and all Boston at Mount Auburn. I thank all the doctors and quarantines, but more than all, and first of all, and last of all, and all the time, I thank God. In all the six thousand years of the world's existence there has not one thing merely "happened so." God is not an anarchist, but a King, a Father.

TODD LINCOLN.

When little Todd, the son of President Lincoln, died, all the land sympathized with the sorrow in the White House. He used to rush into the room where the Cabinet was in session, and while the most eminent men of the land were discussing the questions of national existence. But the child had no care about those questions. Now God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are in perpetual session in regard to this world and kindred worlds. Shall you, his child, rush in to criticise or arrign or condemn the divine government? No; the Cabinet of the Eternal Three can govern and will govern in the wisest and best way, and there never will be a mistake, and like a razor skilfully swung, shall cut that which ought to be cut, and avoid that which ought to be avoided. Precision to the very hair-breadth. Earthly time-pieces may get out of order and strike wrong, saying it is one o'clock when it is two or two when it is three. God's clock is always right and when it is one it strikes one, and when it is twelve it strikes twelve, and the second hand is as accurate as the minute hand.

THE RAZOR OF WAR.

Further, my text tells us that God sometimes shaves nations: "In the same day shall the Lord shave with the razor that is hired." With one sharp sweep he went across Judah and down went its pride and its power. In 1861 God saved our nation. We had allowed to grow Sabbath desecration, and oppression, and blasphemy, and fraud, and impurity, and all sorts of turpitude. The South had its sins, and the North its sins, and the East its sins, and the West its sins. We had been warned again and again, and we did not heed. At length the sword of war cut from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, and from Atlantic seaboard to Pacific seaboard. The pride of the land, not the cowards, but the heroes, on both sides went down. And that which we took for the sword of war was the Lord's razor.

In 1862, again, it went across the land. In 1863 again. In 1864 again. Then the sharp instrument was incased and put away. Never in the history of ages was any land more thoroughly shaved than during those four years of civil combat, and, my brethren, if we do not quit some of our individual and national sins, the Lord will again take us in hand. He has other razors within reach besides war; epidemics, droughts, deluges, plagues—grasshopper and locust—or our overtowering success may so far excite the jealousy of other lands that, under some pretext, the great nations of Europe and Asia may combine to put us down. This nation, so easily approached on North and South and from both oceans, might have on hand at once more hostilities than were ever arrayed against any one Power.

We have recently been told by skilful engineers that all our fortresses around New York harbor could not keep the shells from being hurled from the sea into the heart of these great cities.

Insulted China, the wealthiest of nations, as will be realized when her resources are developed, will have adopted all the modes of modern warfare, and at the Golden Gate may be discussing whether Americans must go. If the combined jealousies of Europe and Asia should come upon us, we should have more work on hand than would be pleasant. I hope no such combination against us will ever be formed; but I want to show that, as Assyria was the hired razor against Judah, and Cyrus the hired razor against Babylon, and the Huns the hired razor against the Goths, there are now many razors that the Lord could hire if, because of our national sins, he should undertake to shave us. In 1870, Germany was the razor with which the Lord shaved France. England is the razor with which very shortly the Lord will shave Russia. But nations are to repent in a day. May a speedy and world-wide coming to God hinder on both sides of the sea all national calamity. But do not let us, as a nation, either by unrighteous law at Washington, or bad lives among ourselves, defy the Almighty.

THE RAZOR OF ANCIENT ROME.

One would think that our national symbol of the eagle might sometimes suggest another eagle, that which ancient Rome carried. In the talons of that eagle were clutched at one time Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Dalmatia, Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Mœsia, Dacia, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Egypt, and all Northern Africa, and all the islands of the Mediterranean, indeed, all the world that was worth having—an hundred and twenty millions of people under the wings of that one eagle. Where is she now? Ask Gibbon, the historian, in his prose poem, the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Ask her gigantic ruins straggling their sadness through the ages, the screech owls at windows out of which world-wide conquerors looked. Ask the day of judgment when her crowned debauchees, Commodus and Pertinax, and Caligula and Diocletian, shall answer for their infamy? As rulers and as nations let us repent, and have our trust in a pardoning God, rather than depend on former successes for immunity! Out of thirteen greatest battles of the world, Napoleon had lost but one before Waterloo. Pride and destruction often ride in the same saddle.

THE HIRED WEAPON.

But notice once more, and more than all in my text, that God is so kind and loving, that when it is necessary for him to cut, he has to go to others for the sharp edged weapon. "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired." God is love. God is pity. God is help. God is shelter. God is rescue. There are no sharp edges about him, no thrusting points, no instruments of laceration. If you want balm for wounds, he has that. If you want salve for divine eyesight, he has that. But if there is sharp and cutting work to do which requires a razor, that he hires. God has nothing about him that hurts, save when dire necessity demands, and then he has to go clear off to some one else to get the instrument.

This divine geniality will be no novelty to those who have pondered the Calvarean massacre, where God submerged himself in human tears, and crimsoned himself from punctured arteries, and let the terrestrial and infernal works maul him until the chandeliers of the sky had to be turned out, because the universe could not endure the indecency. Illustrious for love he must have been to take all that as our substitute, paying out of his own heart the price of our admission at the gates of heaven.

King Henry II., of England, crowned his son as king, and on the day of coronation put on a servant's garb and waited, he, the king, at the son's table, to the astonishment of all the princes. But we know of a more wondrous scene, the King of heaven and earth offering to put on you, his child, the crown of life, and in the form of a servant waiting on you with blessing. Extol that love, all painting, all sculpture, all music, all architecture, all worship! In Dresdenian gallery let Raphael hold him up as a child, and in Antwerp Cathedral let Rubens hand him down from the cross as a martyr, and Handel make all his oratorio vibrate around that one chord—"He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquity." But not until all the redeemed get home, and from the countenances of all the piled-up galleries of the ransomed shall be revealed the wonders of redemption, shall either man or seraph or archangel know the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God.

AN UNFINISHED MONUMENT.

At our national capital, a monument in honor of him who did more than any one to achieve our American Independence, was for scores of years in building, and most of us were discouraged and said it never would be completed. And how glad we all were when in the presence of the highest officials of the nation, the work was done! But will the monument to him who died for the eternal liberation of the human race ever be completed? For ages the work has been going on; evangelists and apostles and martyrs have been adding to the heavenly pile, and every one of the millions of the redeemed going up from earth, has made to it contribution of gladness, and weight of glory is swung to the top of other weight of glory, higher and higher as the centuries go by, higher and higher as the old millenniums roll, sapphire on the top of jasper, sardonyx on the top of chalcedony, and chrysoprasus, above topaz, until, far beneath shall be the walls and towers and domes of the great capital, a monument forever and forever rising, and yet never done. "Unto him who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests for ever." Allelujah, amen.

Short Sermons.

BY MATHETES.

Matt. xxv. 2.—Five were wise and five were foolish. The foolish took no oil in their vessels with their lamps.

I fear there are thousands all around us in that condition. No oil, and the bridegroom soon and suddenly to come.

It may be called a want of indespensable preparation, the want of which is ruinous.

There is but one indespensable preparation. To be without oil is to be without Christ; having Him we have all; not having Him we have nothing.

To have Christ is known by sincere and constant repentence of everything wrong in us. It is still better known by faith in Him, shown by a happy confidence that though we have so constantly to repent of wrong things in us, yet Christ makes good the great and grievous and constant deficiency. He is made unto us *righteousness*, as well as wisdom and sanctification and redemption.

No oil! Utterly unprepared. Oh terrible condition to be in, when the poor, unprepared soul finds the door shut; knocks and knocks, only to hear the fearful words spoken within, 'I know you not;'" spoken, too, by that voice that during life, the day of preparation, would have spoken only words of encouragement and invitation to every soul knocking at the door of hope. Knock here, in this life, and it will be opened. Knock there, and it will be in vain, it is too late forever. The door is shut to those not having oil, never never to be opened.

Reader, are you conscious, or even strongly suspicious, that you have no oil for your lamp? Then set it down that you will never rest till you get it.

That is just the great business you have to do. Let nothing turn you away. Think of the words that may also ring in your ears with a power and terror no human language can describe. The door is shut, the door is shut, you knock and knock, only to hear repeated the yet more terrible words, "I know you not."

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MAKES A COOLING DRINK.

Into half a tumbler of ice water put a teaspoonful of Acid Phosphate; add sugar to the taste.

How Mr. James Laid Down The Law.

Mrs. James seemed to feel when she went to housekeeping that the time had gone by for her to have any leisure for reading, or any time to give further attention to music. Now practical duties would absorb her, but she hoped to find a little leasure now and then to run through one of the latest novels, and to glance at the magazines once a month, so as to be able to chat with some of her husband's literary friends about them; but as for any regular reading and study, that was, of course, out of the question.

Mr. James had enjoyed a college education, and although engaged in active mercantile life, he had a literary turn of mind, had always been a great reader and wished still to read and study. At the time of his marriage he had already accumulated a library of several hundred volumes of standard works, and he was fond of frequenting one of the best of the book stores, and often came home with some new publication which he wished to enjoy with his wife. As he was possessed of no wealth, and was earning but a moderate income, Mrs. James kept but one servant, and was accustomed to do much of her light housework herself. A bright, energetic, ambitious little body she was, and she took great pride in her new house, and in beautifying it in the many artistic ways in which women can now-a-days adorn their homes.

Her little blue-eyed daughter, just three years old, necessarily occupied much of her time and thought, and her mind was so pre-occupied evenings with her various household cares and duties. Mr. James had discovered that when he read aloud, his wife, who was always busily engaged with her fancy work, would become absent-minded or rather absorbed with her own thoughts, and did not hear what her husband was reading.

Then oftentimes her cook would come to the parlor door and interrupt her, asking for some instructions which might have been given previously, or Mrs. James, entirely diverted from the reading, would think of something she would like to say to the cook after breakfast or her early morning work, and so excuse herself, thus breaking in upon the pleasures of the evening.

Mr. James had been annoyed in this way so many times that he spoke out pretty sharply one evening. "Now, Lizzie, see here. I have given all the day to business and you to household duties. Let us start out this winter and have some recreation in the evenings when we are at home, and dispense with unnecessary interruptions.

"It will do us both good, and we are foolish if we don't take it. I want you to see Prof. Schmidt to-morrow, and engage him to give you one lesson a week in music, and then you practice an hour every morning, let what will come, and you will soon enjoy your piano again, and give enjoyment to others as you used to.

"And, another thing, I don't want you to do any more of that fine fancy work, drawn work, do you call it? that takes all your thought while I am reading. It is no pleasure for me to read aloud, and look up occasionally for an appreciative glance, when I come to some striking Shakespearean utterance, to find you perfectly oblivious to what I am reading, while you are puzzling over that work. I sometimes feel like tossing the whole thing into the fire!

"Now, I'm serious about this. This is the only time we have to read, and I'm bound to improve it. By spending two hours an evening, for three or four evenings a week during the winter, we'll be able to accomplish considerable reading, and then we'll have backgammon, or chess, or music afterwards. Give all your orders to Bridget before supper time, and let us have some peaceful evenings, for I do not want you to have any of these matters on your mind. I would much rather you would fold your hands for a few hours, and let us take turns in reading aloud, than to be forever busy over your fancy work."

"Don't get excited, husband," said Mrs. James, as soon as she had an opportunity to speak, "what has come over you that you lay the law down so emphatically?"

"Nothing new has occurred," replied her husband. "But I have been thinking of this matter for some time. The other evening when I was getting to the most interesting part of 'The Merchant of Venice,' in comes Bridget with some inquiries about breakfast, and telling you that the grocer had not sent certain things ordered. Then you called for the account book, and from that we began to talk of expenses, until Venice and its people drifted away into a misty distance to give place to butter, eggs, and so forth. Now, all these practical matters can be attended to at other times, and I do not wish to have my evenings spoiled in that way. It really seems as if a good many of you ladies have such a craze of late for making fancy things that you feel that your hands must be busy every moment, and you have given up many more important occupations, your reading and your music, for instance, to take all these stitches, and make these pretty things."

"You recall a talk of Miss Lyman's years ago when I was at Vassar," rejoined his wife. "We girls were in the habit of doing all sorts of fancy work between dinner and dessert, as it took some time to remove the plates for the company of four hundred or more who sat at tables. Some of us would take out our crocheting, others made tatting, others embroidered, and as I think of it now it was a ridiculous way for us to do. Miss Lyman, who was lady principal then, said nothing for a few weeks, but one day in chapel she gave us a practical talk on conversation and table manners. She said she never wanted to see any more fancy work or handiwork of any kind done at the dinner table in that college. She believed in industry, and knew that much could be accomplished in many ways by improving odd and spare moments of time. But she thought it just as necessary that young ladies should learn how to fold their hands quietly, to be composed, and learn how to converse, and a dinner table was one of the places were conversation should be carried on, and in a bright, entertaining way. Instead of picking up your fancy work to take to the table with you when the dinner-bell rings, carry along some interesting bit of news, or an anecdote, or an incident, something agreeable to relate she said, 'and let us have conversation at our tables from our intellectual young ladies, instead of a company of knitters and tatting makers.' And then in her most dignified manner, she added, 'It is a great accomplishment, young ladies, to be able to converse, and a good opportunity is here afforded for you to learn that rare art.'"

"I wonder you remember her words so well," said Mr. James. "She certainly was a sensible woman."

"Indeed she was," replied his wife, "but yet that was a different matter from doing fancy work in the evening. Many of her good talks come to me now, and are a help to me, and if I had only acted upon them all I should be quite a perfect character, I suppose. She was a wonderful woman, as every one among those first classes at Vassar will testify. Her talks to the scholars on a great variety of subjects were invaluable."

"I wonder how she would like to see some of her old pupils now with books and conversation neglected, sitting down at their crazy quilts in the morning, and their drawn work in the evening, while servants, with many of them, form the chief subject of conversation?" inquired Mr. James.

"She would give us one of her good talks, I know, and show us how we could manage all our affairs easily, and still find time to carry on some intellectual pursuits," replied his wife.

"Well, we'll just imagine we have one of those talks to-night from Miss Lyman in addition to mine, and we'll act upon it from this time henceforth," replied Mr. James.

"Now, really, you wouldn't have me sit and fold my hands all the evening," said his wife. "That seems almost as absurd as it was for us to do our fancy work at table."

"Then have something that does not absorb your attention," replied her husband. "Now you know when you are interested in making all those hole and sewing them up, and weaving in all that elaborate work, you don't hear what I'm reading, or care anything about it. Now, be honest, what were you thinking about when I was reading Gladstone's speech? Do you know what he was talking about?"

Mrs. James laughed outright, and, with a quizzical look on her face, replied, "You ask me too close questions, Will."

"Be honest, now," said Mr. James, "what was it?"

"Well," said Mrs. James, slowly, "I was wondering if this piece of work was as handsome as Mrs. Andrews', and if this pattern was as wide as hers, and I was also thinking that I must look after my pickles in the morning, and make grape jelly, and was planning some work for Bridget,"—and she laughed again. Then she added, "It *is* hard for me to listen when my hands are engaged, and if I cannot school myself to it I will give it up, for you are right about the reading, and we must have a regular time for it."

The result of the talk was that they did as Mr. James suggested. Mrs. James put away all practical work at five o'clock, her orders for breakfast were given, and everything arranged for pleasant, uninterrupted evenings. There were, of course, occasional interruptions, but by good planning and the considering the improvement of her intellectual life a part of each day's duty, it was surprising to them that so much was accomplished in one winter. Mrs. James found time to give to music, to join a musical society, and to enjoy much reading, and all without neglecting her family or her church duties, and having some time for visiting the poor and the sick, and giving them comfort.

Her home was a delightful and inviting place for many young gentlemen of their acquaintance, who appreciated the cordial hospitality and the good cheer which they always found there, and who were stimulated by the intellectual and elevating society, the pleasant readings and the music, to higher ideas of a beautiful and happy home, and were kept from indulging in many ignoble and questionable entertainments by the cultivation of a better and higher taste.

Mrs. James had hosts of friends who admired and loved her; her sons and daughters grew up to think mamma the sweetest woman and the best company in the world; and her husband, after twenty years of married life, was more proud of her than when she was a bride.

"I was a little bit of a tyrant, wasn't I?" said he playfully one evening to his wife, as he referred to the Shakespearean reading of long ago, "but I'm sure you will confess that if you have not so many crazy quilts and fancy furbelows as some of your neighbors, you have other possessions far more valuable."

And Mrs. James did not hesitate to acknowledge that she had. She has thanked her husband more than once for laying down the law so forcibly on a certain subject.

Ministerial Fidelity.

BY REV. W. B. VASSAR.

Who shall set a standard by which a minister's fidelity is to be judged? Surely not men who are willing to alter the standard to conform it to the caprice of time, fashion or station. The question is a serious one to God's servant, because as a true servant, or desiring to be one, he is frustrated in his attempts in many directions by worldly rules to which he must bow, or take the alternative of being looked upon as odd or old fashioned by heedless, frivolous, fashionable, sin-cursed humanity.

We thought of this with freshened force when a brother minister said to us recently: "That man of whom we were speaking is a member of my church in official position, but neither he nor his wife come regularly to our services. They are getting rich and go to different up-town churches. I called on them recently, and a report of my call has reached me. The lady said, 'I like to hear Mr. M. preach, but what a difference there is in men! He called on us a few days ago, but could not let well enough alone, but must propose prayer before leaving. Mr. B. (another minister) called the same week and I could not but notice the difference in the two men. He was as jolly as you please, and you would never have taken him for a minister.'" I said to my brother, "Bless God for that testimany to your fidelity." Was I right? Has it come to this, that a minister of Jesus can only pray in the church service, and gives offence if the blessing of heaven is asked upon the home of a member of the church! Surely, we are living in degenerate times. Let God's man" do nothing to foster this unholy living.

Never will I forget that our minister calling on our family in my father's home, never offered to pray until requested, and we children thought it was a task for him to do so, and wondered if the carpet was sufficiently dusted for the impress of his black pants. Our education may have been peculiar, but knowing our father to have often made a score or more calls in a day, and to have been in the habit of praying in every house, and our good pastor might have known how sadly incomplete his call would be without a "call" upon heaven for a blessing upon our humble home.

This question has perplexed many serious men. What think you, brethren? Can the pastor pray in the home? In my humble opinion, if he can not pray he had better leave the call unmade.

We call on thee, O God of grace,
O may we see thy radiant face.
Hear thou the prayer we make on bended knee,
And bid our burdened hearts go free.

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