

Poetry.

PRAYER.

If, when I kneel to pray
With eager lips I say
Lead, give me all the things that I desire,
Health, wealth, fame, friends, brave heart,
And strength for mighty works to banish ill,
In such a prayer as this
The blessing I must miss.

Or if I only dare
To raise this fainting prayer:
Thou seest, Lord, that I am poor and weak,
And cannot tell what things I ought to seek:
I therefore do not ask at all, but still
Trust thy bounty all my wants to fill:
My lips shall thus grow dumb,
The blessing shall not come.

But if I lovingly
And thus in faith I call:
Through Christ, O Lord, I pray thee give to me
Not what I would, but what seems best to thee,
Of life, of health, of service and of strength,
O till to thy full joy I come at length;
My prayer shall not avail,
The blessing shall not fail.

"Being perplexed, I say,
Lord, make it right!
Night is as day to thee,
Darkness as light.
I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much,
My trembling hand may shake,
My skillful hand may break:
Thine can make no mistake."

A MEDITATION.

BY REV. BENJAMIN COPELAND.

My years are very few, O God!
More rapidly they pass
Than clouds, whose transient tale is told
In shadows on the grass.

My years are very few, O God!
But they are full of thee—
A drop of being in thy life's
Unfathomable sea.

My years are very few, O God!
O, let me clearly see
How they grow strong and beautiful
In thy immensity.

My years are very few, O God!
The sum of them is small;
But each may serve thy blessed will,
And thus shall have them all.

My years are very few, O God!
On earth, but not in heaven;
To thee, eternal life and love,
Be endless praises given.

The Fireside.

NED'S WORK.

Ned scrambled up the ladder, lifted the trap-door, and stood, with his head above the roof, looking far away over the country. "Cap! Ned! Ned!" he called on the top of his head, "over Ned's shoulder."

It was a big fire. No doubt of that. There were several opinions, though, as to where it might be.

"Where do you say, Captain Abel?" Ned asked.

"Hard to tell; shouldn't wonder, though, if it were over at the Dominie's."

"Father, father, Captain Abel thinks that it is at the Dominie's," cried Ned, turning across the flat roof, and looking down, toward the second story window.

"O Ned, go back, go back, you'll break your neck," screamed Eva and May.

"Come down, Ned," said his father.

"I want to help them," cried Ned.

"Standing on the edge of the roof, at twelve o'clock in the night, will not help any," said Mr. Lovell.

Ned scrambled down the ladder, and went back to bed. If he could have had his own way, I suppose that he would have run over the fields to the watch for any one who might be passing, and could give the news. Just as the rest of the family sat down to breakfast, he ran in crying.

"Captain Abel was right. It was the Dominie's barn, burned to the ground—his cow and horse, too."

"Oh," they exclaimed, "who told you? How did it happen? Poor old Ned! What will the Dominie do?"

"Will the people help him, father?"

"I think so, daughter. We must all do something."

"Poor Dominie! He shall have my silver dollar!" cried little Cyrus promptly.

They all smiled; that silver dollar was expected to do so much.

"Would it not be a good plan for some one to go around with a subscription paper?" asked Mrs. Lovell.

Yes, so Mr. Lovell thought. He should advise that.

But it was within half an hour of school time. Ned must be off at once. He had not looked into his grammar or geography. "I suppose that it will be about the same with the other fellows," he thought. And really there was not much studying done that day. Even the teacher seemed unlike himself.

"The Dominie is our good pastor," he said, "and we must all think of some way to help him."

The boys held a stump meeting at recess, to talk over what they could do. The one who could talk best was allowed to make the first speech. Before the bell rang for study, they had thought of some very sensible plans.

Ned, however, had devised a way of his own, a way with which he was particularly pleased. He was sure that his father would make no objection, while his mother and sisters would rejoice to have him shine as such a useful character. The boys talked it all over together, along the way home. When Ned left them, he said good-by for a week. "Yes," he said, "I am sure that it will take every day of a week."

"Why, then, you'll have no time to eat or to sleep," said Hugh Olmsted.

"Are you sure that your father will let you do it?" asked Tom More.

"Yes, certainly," said Ned.

"Will you wait?"

"No, indeed. I shall make old Rye trot me around."

"I'd like to go, too, if I could get a horse," said another boy. "But father will be using the horses in the plow."

"I think that my father will let the plowing go for a week," said Ned, and off he ran to tell his plans at home.

said Eva, when tea was over, and the gentlemen had gone out to look at things about the barn. "I want to hear, too, because I'll give my dollar," said Cyrus.

"I needn't study any lesson for a week," Ned said, after he had told the girls what he intended to do.

"When are you going to ask father about it?" inquired Eva.

"As soon as Mr. Simpson goes; oh! father will be sure to let me do it."

"Mother, do you think that father will let Ned go all over the country with a subscription paper?" asked Eva.

"Ned can ask him," said Mrs. Lovell.

"But you, mother—you are quite willing!" said Ned.

"It must be just as your father says."

"I will go now, and make it all right with father," Ned said, confidently.

On his way, he met old Captain Abel, and stopped, of course, to tell him about it.

"I'll be back in a few minutes, to tell you what time I must be off in the morning," he said.

Mr. Simpson had gone, and Ned found his father at the front gate, at last, to listen to his story. Eva and May watched the two from the attic-room window, as they talked over the matter. They saw Ned begin in a very earnest way, and they noticed that their father listened, making no reply till Ned was at the end of his story.

They saw, then, that their father shook his head, and began his part of the talk.

"Why, mother, I don't believe that father will let Ned do it."

"No; so I supposed," said Mrs. Lovell.

"But isn't it right for us to do all that we can to help others?"

"Yes, certainly; only in helping we must choose wise ways. I dare say that your father sees some serious objection to Ned's way."

"I'm sorry for him," said May.

"So am I. But, some time, he will see that it is all right."

Meanwhile, Ned had to bear a sharp disappointment. He walked slowly back to Captain Abel, and told him that he should not need old Rye in the morning. "Father thinks more of the plowing than he does of the Dominie's," he murmured.

"No, no," cried Captain Abel. "You don't quite believe what you are saying! I am sorry for you, though. I used to see this kind of thing in the army."

Captain Abel had fought in our civil war. Indeed, he had dug his way out of that famous Libby Prison, so that Ned was ready to listen with respect to what he said.

"I thought that we were all put here to work for each other! I don't know the meaning of all this talk about denying ourselves that we may help others," said Ned.

"The fact is, your father wants you to do work in one way, and you want to do it in another. As to denying one's self, Mr. Lovell is doing that to-day; he sold one of his horses to Mr. Simpson, and I know that he did it partly to raise money for the Dominie."

"Father didn't tell me that," said Ned.

"No; a wise man doesn't tell all that he knows. As to helping the Dominie, if that is what you are after, don't you suppose that a gentleman like your father, who every one knows and respects, will get a great deal more money than a lad like you going round with a subscription-paper?"

"I didn't know that father means to go."

"No, you didn't want to hear. And a poor old man like me has to tell you that your father is wiser than you," said Captain Abel.

"I'll have to go to work to-morrow on that old geography, and I just hate it," groaned Ned.

"Ho, ho! that is the trouble; you wanted a week off from your work! Just like it was in the army. I know soldiers that were always wishing they could command the army; the country would be saved right off. But those same men, when a battle was near, were the very ones who wanted to run away and hide. If they had dared, they would have run out of harm's way, shirking their own work, and wishing for some other. Fine generals they would have made! It is only by doing the hard geography, and all that sort of thing, Ned, that you will be able to do the larger work, when it comes."

"Oh! but indeed it wasn't all just to get away from lessons, Captain Abel. I really want to do as the Dominie told us in his lesson; I want to feel that I am doing God's work in the world."

"That is just what God gives you to do, Ned. Stick to the geography, and you will be doing God's work a great deal more than if you were trotting over the country, on old Rye, for a week, begging subscriptions for the Dominie!"—*Sunday School Times.*

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ORIGINAL PUZZLES WITH SOLUTIONS, ORIGINAL OR SELECTED STORIES, AND SOLUTIONS TO THE MYSTERY RESPECTFULLY SOLICITED.

STORY AND POETRY.

PROMPTED BY LOVE.

One morning I found little Doris busy at her ironing table, smoothing the towels and stockings. "Isn't it hard for the little ones?" I asked.

A look like sunshine came into her face, as I glanced toward her mother, who was rocking the baby.

"It isn't hard when I do it for mamma," she said, softly.

How true it is, that love makes labor sweet! So, if we love the blessed Saviour, we shall not find it hard to work for Him. It is love that makes His yoke easy and His burden light.

THE LITTLE ONES.

Only a little lad
With a morsel of barley bread,
And a few small fish—'twas all he had,
So the disciples said.
As they placed his gift before
The blessed Master's feet
When, lo! from out the wondrous store,
Five thousand people eat!

Only a little child
Obeying the Saviour's call:
Yielding his heart—by sin defiled—
With his gifts and graces small.
Yet, firm with a purpose true,
And filled with a faith sublime,
The good that little child can do
May reach to the end of time.

—And Anna, in *The Sunbeam*.

Contributions from Young Folks.

THE MYSTERY.

No. 146.—BIBLE QUESTIONS.

FROM A. M. NEWCOMB, CARLETON, ST. JOHN.

1. Where is the sentence, "Come by the boat?"

2. Where is the sentence, "The veil shall be taken away?"

4. Where is the following mentioned, viz.: "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!"

No. 147.—BIBLE QUESTIONS.

FROM A. D. NEVILL, UPPER WOODSTOCK.

1. Where is the sentence, "The house appointed for all living?"

3. Where does it speak of goodness being mocked and jested at when they delivered the news?

No. 149.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

FROM "VAN," LOWER PRINCE WILLIAM, YORK.

One of Jacob's wives; one of the United States; to mend; an European river.

Answer: Leah, Star, St. Lawrence.

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