

DAILY GRACE.

BY MRS. E. C. FRIEND.

"Teach us to pray" Christ's followers said,
To Him, whose ever listening ear
Was ready all their cries to hear:
He answered made: "Our daily bread
Oh give us Lord, from day to day;
And teach us how to watch and pray."

Not for the future unexplored,
Unknown its hopes, or fears, or care,
Are we to pray for grace to bear:
But just this hour, so fully stored
With present needs and present woes,
We will, in prayer, to Father go.

'Tis not the burden of to-day,
That to the most our strength doth test
And makes us long in vain for rest:
But future cares, in long array,
Come trooping by, year after year,
To chill our hearts with needless fear.

Oh fainting soul! Oh foolish heart!
Just listen, hear the Saviour say,
Give us our daily bread to-day:
Dear Father, grace to us impart
To do the duty of the hour,
The future lays not in our power.

Oh! take our lives into thy care;
Nor need, to us, the sun reveal;
Whether 'tis woe or whether weal:
The present, Lord, help us to bear;
With cheerful hearts and courage true,
The way of duty we'll pursue,
Trusting, from hour to hour, we'll prove,
The strength and safety of thy love.

BRIDLING THE TONGUE.

Another beautiful Sabbath-day had come, bringing to many sweet rest and quiet. But at the little's the day had begun just as many another Sunday had the past year—a late breakfast; no time for prayers; hurried preparations for church, with the usual amount of fault-finding and sour looks.

Poor Mrs. Little looked just about as discouraged as a woman could look; her face bore a sort of helpless, don't-care expression. Here was John, the man who had sworn to love and protect her, and who once could not find words sweet enough to suit him, fretting and fuming over the loss of one poor little button that could not stand the pulling of the nervous fingers, and had snapped away into a corner. Worse still, his collar wouldn't set right, and as that followed the button, he exclaimed, "I do wish, Martha Ann (Mattie was the old name), you could do things like other folks. My collars never bothered me so when mother ironed them, and the buttons weren't for ever a-coming off. 'Twould please me greatly to have you look over my clothes once in a while. I should like to know how much a man is expected to bear." Then came the angry reply, accompanied by tears, as Martha Ann selected another collar from the shining array in the drawer.

After a while the children were scolded into their clothes, and the family started for church, with long faces and unhappy thoughts. They sat through the singing of the old familiar hymns and the earnest prayers unmoved, thinking still of their own grievances. A stranger occupied the pulpit that morning, and he arrested the attention of all as he arose and with impressive voice repeated the words of the text: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Then followed, not the usual polished essay, but a simple discourse, so plain and practical that the smallest child could understand. He talked to them of the power of the tongue; of its use for good or evil; of the influence of words upon themselves and others, forcibly illustrating each thought, and closing with these words: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

There were two in that congregation who went away with sad hearts feeling that by their words they were condemned. This they felt more than ever, as after supper they overheard their two children talking about the events of the day.

"Oh, Bessie, didn't that minister talk good. I wonder if he knew about us—at our house. I tell you what! I do wish something would happen so that we needn't be scolding all the time," exclaimed the impetuous Ned.

"So do I," replied Bessie in a sad tone. "Only think what a beautiful home Cousin Robbie and Mamie have. Don't you remember when we were there last summer how happy every one was? Uncle Tom never scolded once at Aunt Nan—"

"Yes," interrupted Ned, "and Aunt Nan always smiled at him so pleasant. Oh dear, I wish our home could—"

—here the words were lost, but the parent knew what the wish was, and they both well remembered the time when in their home, too, were loving words and smiles; and each made a solemn resolve that it should be so again. Together they knelt and asked God's help that from that day they might overcome this fault which was crushing out their own love and alienating their children.

How they succeeded you may imagine if you listen to another conversation of Ned and Bessie's one week later.

"Oh, Bessie I'm so glad that you have come home from grandmother's. I have something so important to tell you?"

"Well, Ned," said smiling Bessie, "tell away."

"Well, I am afraid father and mother are going to die, or be very ill, or something."

"Why, Ned, what is the trouble?"

"Well, it commenced last Monday morning. The first thing I noticed was that father didn't grumble about breakfast being late, and he didn't say a word about 'muddy coffee,' and he told mother she looked so pale and tired, and that he would help her about her work—and he did—and mother smiled just like Aunt Nan, and looked quite happy. Every day they act just like that. The day I fell into the pond and spoiled my new clothes, mother didn't scold one bit, only she looked very sorry, and I can tell you you won't catch me doing that thing again, if she is going to look so sad. I wish she would scold instead. There, now you know why I feel so troubled. Ain't you worried?"

"No, Ned, I am very happy. Last Sunday evening, just before I went home with grandfather, mother called me to her room, and told me that she and papa were going to try and be like Auntie Nan and Uncle Tom; they were going to try and not be cross to each other and to us, and she wanted me to ask Jesus to help them and to try myself to be kind and loving. I wanted to tell you then, but mother wished me to wait, until you had noticed the change yourself. Now, Ned, we will try real hard, won't we?"

"Yes, I'll try," and off went Ned, singing, "Kind words can never die."

"We can never be too careful
What the seed our hand shall sow;
Love from love is sure to ripen,
Hate from hate is sure to grow.
Seed of good or ill we scatter
Heedlessly along our way,
But a glad or grievous fruitage
Waits us at the harvest day."

FOR THE YOUNG.

A knock at your door! What is wanted? There is a messenger for you. "For me?" Yes, for you; and an answer is waited. You get the message. "Very well, I shall give an answer directly." You take up again the book you were reading, or turn to your play or amusement. You forget all about the messenger. An hour after you remember. You inquire. You are told that "After waiting a long time the messenger thought you did not wish to give any answer and went away."

Now, a knock at your heart! Last January, by this our little messenger, a message came to you, warning you of your danger and calling you to come to Jesus. An answer was waited. Did you give it at once, or did you put it off, and turn to your play? And another messenger came, and another in February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November. And they were all to the same purpose. They pleaded with you to give your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. An answer was waited all the while. Has an answer been given? If you forgot all about it, taken up with your book or your play, then what if this messenger should prove the last?

A lad, the son of a widowed mother, went to Australia. He promised to write, but no letter came. Regularly, time after time, for eight years, the mother who knew his address, went on writing, writing—but never one word in return from her ungrateful, heartless boy. Patient love conquered at last: a penitent letter came. How long, dear reader, has Jesus been sending you His messages of grace? for six, or eight, or twelve years? Has patient love yet conquered you?—or are you worse than the heartless boy, while Jesus is still pleading, "How often would I have gathered you?"

Surely there are some among our readers who, since last New Year, have at least begun to think about their souls. Perhaps a word in the Bible, or from a sermon or book, darted through you, like a flash from the wrath to come. And the memory of that alarm haunts you still—like an awful flash of lightning which we have not forgotten to this day. That glimpse of wrath, that load of unpardoned sins, lies heavy on your heart. Do you intend thus to go on, heavy laden and sad, carrying that burden, which grows heavier, all through life? The word is as true now as it will be were you to wait for twenty years—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

O, will you not begin in the morning, that you may have a long happy day with Jesus?

Many years ago there were two young girls who were bosom friends—Jane and Mary we shall call them. Mary as well as Jane, was the child of a godly family. Jane who was already a new creature, noticed the deepening sadness of her friend. She guessed the cause, but for a while feared to speak to her. At last, moved by her affection, she tenderly asked, "Mary, dear, is your soul at rest?" Bursting

into tears, Mary answered, "O, Jane, you are the first that has asked me that question." The end was that Mary too, found rest in Jesus. Mary still lives; Jane, there is good cause to hope, has long been in heaven. But had it not been for that loving question, Mary might have been going on, unforgiven and in darkness, to this hour.

Dear young readers, have you a load at your heart about which no one has ever spoken to you, and of which no one knows? Suffer us in tender kindness to say how much we feel for you; and to tell you Christ's message once more—"Come unto me, and I will give you rest." (Matt. ii. 28.) An answer is waited. Will you come or not?—Children's Record.

GIVE ME ANOTHER STAR.

It is related that a ship's captain gave his second mate charge of his vessel temporarily, telling him to steer by the North Star. This mate was either utterly incapable, or somewhat intoxicated, for he fell asleep, and allowed the ship to veer completely around, and drift the other way. He woke up, glanced around, and found his star behind him. So he called out to the captain, "Give me another star; I've sailed clear past that one."

This seems to furnish an apt illustration of the course of certain "Free Religionists," who imagine they have transcended Christianity, and, in the craft of "reason," sailed clear past Christ Jesus as the world's divine Redeemer and Teacher of truth, and left him far astern among the mere human reformers of the earth. They seemed to be saying, "Give us another star; we've sailed clear past the Star of Bethlehem."

But their thought is a delusive one. Inflated with the sort of knowledge that "puffeth up," intoxicated with overweening self-conceit, having their foolish hearts darkened, they have allowed the contrary winds of man's shifting doctrine to influence their course. Their poorly steered vessel has swung around, and is drifting, unpiloted, the other way, apart from God's love, toward the barren, sunless reefs of sheer speculation, falsely called science, or toward cold "natural" laws of the universe, where the turbulent waves of doubt dash against the pitiless rocks of despair.

It is vain to ask for another star to follow, save Christ "the Bright and Morning Star," unless one choose to be guided by the transient-burning meteors, the falling stars that seek the earth and grow dark and cold. If any think they have sailed their little bark clear past the guiding light of Christ, it is manifestly because they have drunk from the golden cup full of the world's sorceries, or else, waxing gross of heart, they have shunned to take up their cross daily and follow Jesus.

Christ can never be transcended. For as the polar star shines on forever, clear, serene, steadfast, in the high, pure heavens—so the true, eternal light of life shines from the face of Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory, who in the beginning was the Word, who was with God and was God, who abides ever unchangeable, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

CONFESSING CHRIST.

It is better to have an open enemy than a friend who is ashamed of us behind our backs. To be of real use to a friend, we have to know him pretty well. If we do not know our man we will say things of him that may be meant for his good, but do him harm.

What is true of human friendship is true of the heavenly. To really confess Jesus well, we have to know Him well. We all of us may do harm to the faith we love, by want of tact or knowledge in speaking of Christ, but we do still more by not speaking of Him at all. For every one who does harm by talking what we must call cant, ten do harm by keeping still, when they should talk out.

There is enormous influence in a mere word. The smallest things are considered of importance in a political campaign. An unfortunate alliteration lately is said to have lost a candidate many hundreds of votes. The words were not spoken by the man himself, they were not even the words of a party leader, but they denied certain principles, and the holders of those principles denied the party. It was not by an effective and rich organization that Christianity was spread, but by boundless enthusiasm, born of the personal influence of Christ, conveyed through the apostles. There is a certain apostolic succession, not physical or confined, but spiritual and real. It is the personal influence of Jesus in the life of the church that, with the power of the Holy Spirit, is to convert the world.

The life of God made manifest in the lives of God's people, is the real instrument that turns men to righteousness. If we have better Christians we

will have more of them. The coldness of Christians is the destruction of the world. The savorless salt cannot flavor the world. Christ must be confessed in men's lives. We must be willing to sacrifice for Christ. We must seek to have Christ alter our life every day. If we are proud, Christ must make us humble. If we are grasping, Christ must make us unselfish. If we are hard and cruel, Christ must make us forbearing and compassionate. Thus we confess Christ in a tongue men all understand and cannot call cant.—Christian Hour.

THE UNSEEN HAND.

"Thank you very much, that was such a help to me," said a sick woman as she dropped exhausted on her pillow, after her bed had been made for her.

The friend to whom she spoke looked up in surprise. She had not touched the invalid, for she had feared to give pain, even by laying a hand upon her. She knew that the worn body was so racked with many pains, and had become so tender and sensitive, that the sick woman could not bear to be lifted or supported in any way. All that her friends could do was to stand quietly by.

"I did nothing to help you, dear. I wished to be of use, but I only stood behind, without touching you at all; I was afraid of hurting you."

"That was just it," said the invalid with a bright smile; "I knew you were there, and that if I slipped I could not fall, and the thought gave me confidence. It was of no consequence that I could neither see, hear nor feel you. I knew I was safe all the time, because you were ready to receive me into your arms if needful."

The sufferer paused a moment, and then, with a still brighter smile on her face she added:

"What a sweet thought this has brought to my mind! It is just the same with my heavenly Friend. 'Fear not, for I will be with thee,' is the promise, and thanks be to God, I know he is faithful that promised. I can neither see, hear, nor touch him with the mortal senses, but just as I knew you were behind, with loving arms extended, so I know that beneath me are the everlasting arms."

RANDOM READINGS.

He that can feast upon another's misery, vexation, or disappointment, has a most unhealthy soul.

Indifference to another's comfort, or in reference to the least sin, betrays our hardened state of mind.

If God shows you mercy, he intends that you should go and imitate his example: read Matt. xviii.

God holds the person of one talent just as responsible for its proper use as he does the man who has ten.

Where we are ignorant, God is wise; where we stand blindly in the dark, he is in the light.—Phillips Brooks.

The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
And he is mine forever.

If believers are condemned by the world, let them remember that they shall not be condemned with the world.

Economy wisely directed is not only not stingy nor mean, but the thing that makes benevolence and generous giving possible.

Will you present engagement further your communion with God, or hinder it? You should be very careful on this point: "Do all to the Glory of God."

Men talk about what unbelief is doing to kill and destroy Christianity, but indifference is doing vastly more to tie its hands and smother it and make it powerless.

Ours is an age of philanthropic progress. The spirit of Christianity is filling men's hearts with sympathy, and urging them to do something to help the helpless and care for the friendless. The need of such action is pressing. The bitter cry of the outcast is heard on all sides. A wall of sorrow comes from the streets and highways.

Fear not the hour when you will descend into the valley of death's shadow. Not all solitary and alone will you be then. Believer in Christ! Jesus will be personally, visibly with you at that moment. His arm will encircle you, his bosom will pillow you, his voice will cheer you, his words will strengthen you, his rod and his staff will comfort you, and you shall fear no evil.

A little girl who had perhaps never been across the street alone, was sent on a necessary errand across the way. She stood on the curbstone hesitating; then she looked back, and saw that her mother was looking at her; at once she said, "Yes, mamma, I'll do it, if you'll keep looking at me all the way." So God is regarding you and me, it is that sort of care that he has for us.

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