Our Angels.

Oh! not with any sound they come, or sign,
Which fleshly ear or eye can recognize;
No curiosity can compass or surprise
The secret of that intercourse divine
Which God permits, ordains across the line
The changeless line which bars
Our earth from other stars.

But they do come and go continually,
Our blessed angels, no less ours than his;
The blessed angels whom we think we miss;
Whose empty graves we weep to name or see,
And vainly watch, as once in Galilee
One weeping watched in vain,
Where her lost Christ has lain.

Whenever in some bitter grief we find,
All unawares, a deep, mysterious sense
Of hidden comfort come, we know not whence;
When suddenly we see, where we were blind;
Where we had struggled are content, resigned;
Are strong where we were weak,—
And no more strive nor seek.

Then we may know from the far glad skies,
To note our need, the watchful God has sent,
And for our instant help has called and sent.
Of all our loving angels, the most wise
And tender one, to point to us where lies
The path that will be best,
The path of peace and rest.

—*H. H.*

For the Master.

There are many Christian men and women who show great solicitude to do some service for the Master. They are so anxious about it that they confess their difficulty with extreme sorrow, as tho they felt themselves culpably delinquent. They say that they are not able to find the particular work which they feel themselves most competent to do, and that so many others are better fitted for the various kinds of Christian service that there seems nothing of importance left for them to do.

It is very creditable to any follower of the Master to desire to engage in some service for him. This desire may not always spring from a thorough apprehension of what it is to be a Christian, or of the privileges and duties which belong to membership in the Church of God; but it is born out of a love, not always very deep or very strong, for Him who gave himself for a world of sinners. It may be that some of this class of people who declare that they cannot find anything suitable to do are looking for those things which require the least sacrifice of inclination, or time, or thought, or labor, or means, and that their real desire is for positions in the brotherhood of believers which are more ornamental than useful. Perhaps they are not really willing to do all that is demanded of Christians who are really aggressive, and see to do with all their heart and with all their strength whatever they find that needs to be done.

When there is so much to be done to bring the world to Christ, so much to be done to bring Christians to greater perfection of life and to larger usefulness in the Master's service, it does seem strange that any willing soul should be perplexed as to what to choose. The same persons do not find an equal difficulty in other lines of service. If one should inquire how he might serve his country in time of peace, there would be many suggestions that would spring to his lips: By being a good and industrious citizen; by observing the laws; by conscientiously paying his taxes: by attending the primaries; by studying the character of candidates and always voting for the best; by studying the history and institutions of the Government and seeking to influence men in favor of that which is righteous and salutary in government; by speaking well of the country, its rulers and institutions to strangers; by strengthening the hands of those who have authority and helping them to enforce the laws. There are a thousand things which one can think of wherein he can serve his country well and faithfully. This can be done as effectively, often in private as in public life. One need not be President or senator or representative in Congress, or governor, or mayor, or hold any public office in order to be a good and helpful citizen. If every American citizen were to wait for the President, or for the Governor of his particular State, to suggest some special line of service by which he might be useful to the Government, a great number of our citizens would be left without any assignment. But those who are anxious to uphold the cause of government do not need to be instructed as to what they should do. They find out for themselves, and generally without much difficulty, how they can best prove their own patriotism and kindle patriotism in others.

The opportunity for activity in the kingdom of God is not more restricted than that of service to the State, and the man or woman who despairs of doing anything to advance the cause of Christianity must either be extremely lacking in powers of observation or in willingness to do whatever comes to hand. Not a day passes in which the alert Christian cannot say something or do something to lighten the load of sin and misery which fellow-Christians are bearing, to encourage despairing believers, or to strengthen the hands of pastor, or missionary, or bishop, or of those who have the care of the churches upon them. The highest Christian duty of a mother may be to train her own child so carefully and wisely that its whole life will be sanctified to the religion of Christ. A Christian father's highest duty may be so to shape the life of his young son that he shall grow up to a noble manhood. Christians are not isolated individuals; very few of them are living the life of hermits. They are brought almost hourly into contact with other lives, and it only needs a little observation and the application of a wisdom which is within the grasp of all, to do some very effective work for the Master.

Those who satisfy this noble desire to be of service to the Master by observing with great strictness the letter of the Church laws respecting feasts and seasons and ceremonies, may receive benefit personally therefrom, but they are not in the line of that larger service of which Christianity stands most in need. It is a good thing to keep Lent, to know when Ash Wednesday comes and when Good Friday and Easter occur. It withdraws those who are given to gayety from worldly thoughts for at least a portion of the time. We have not a word to say against it. But it does not satisfy all the claims of the law of the Gospel; for while the Gospel is freedom and joy and good tidings, it does bind to a law of service, not for a particular season of the year but for every passing hour; not to great things necessarily but to little things, the very least, those things which are most commonly neglected, those which if carefully performed would so rapidly extend the kingdom of Christ, and lift the world to a higher plane of Christianity. It is not enough to withhold one's foot from the merry dance and abstain from selfish worldly amusements for forty days and forty nights in every year. It is well, certainly, to do thus much and to strive to fill the mind with worthy thoughts; but those who are really eager to serve the Master will find opportunity in the home, in the street, at the shop—everywhere and every day—for those little services which in the aggregate count for so much.

The Master went into the wilderness to be tempted, and while he was being tempted he fasted. We find our temptations not in the wilderness, but in the midst of the greatest activity, and it is here that we are to be tested for the quality of our faith and the willingness of our spirit.—*The Independent.*

Christain Prayer.

It might perhaps be with justice spoken of as an epoch in the life of the world when men were first taught to pray in a Christain way. Speaking in general, one may say that men have always prayed; that is to say, invocation of the diety, or the dieties, in which men have believed has been common, and in a sense universal, simply because man himself, however perverted or depraved, is always a religious being. When Jesus taught men how to offer prayer to the true God, with the benefit of that intercession on his own part to prepare a way for which was so much the purpose of his own mission in the world—that was an event surpassed in importance only by his own incarnation, and the atonement wrought by him, on which prayer, like every other religious act, has since depended for acceptableness with God.

At first thought it may seem like a strange thing for the disciples of Jesus to come to him with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray." Knowing as we do, how much the religion of a Jew meant to him, how pervasive in his religion the ritual element was, how regularly recurred those hours of prayer he was expected to observe, how striking a part of the temple ceremonial was the intercessory prayer of the priests in the Holy of holies, while the people were "praying without," how rich in the element of supplication were those Psalms so familiar to every Jew,—considering all this, it seems almost a strange thing that those disciples should need to be taught how to pray. Yet the tenor of this request seems even to imply a consciousness that notwithstanding all prayer, was a thing concerning which they needed to be taught, not only as to what prayer is, but also in what terms to give it utterance.

The circumstances is profoundly suggestive as to the dawning consciousness in the minds of the disciples of Jesus that religion was to mean for them from that time forth, something different from what had been its meaning up to that time. We observe the same thing in the case of those who followed John the Baptist. For the request made to Jesus was emphasized by saying, "as John also taught his disciples." Each of these great teachers had impressed his followers from the beginnning that a formal ritual such as that which the law enjoined, was neither religion nor was it prayer. There was dawning on the world in that hour, a wholly new light as to the relations of man with God, and the earliest beam shone into the hearts of those men, just called from their fishing nets and their other humble vocations to first receive this new light and then to reflect it along the ages to come. The petition was the natural, the inevitable one—"Teach us to pray." Since prayer is an instinctive act of the soul into which the light of God has begun to shine.

And the answer of Jesus was what we should expect. What a wonderfully new thing in the world was that "Lord's prayer" now so familiar to us all! The very word, "Father," how new, how wonderful, how precious. All which God had been to their nature those twelve disciples knew. Of that shadowing presence once hallowing the most sacred place in the temple, and still believed to be there although the visible Shekinah had left it forever, they had often thought with awe. As the great and awful being who had spoken from Sinai in voice, of the thunder, amid the blaze of lightnings and the deep rumble of rocking earthquakes they had heard often. God as a being to be feared they knew. What did they know of him as a being to be loved, trusted sought unto as a child turns to a parent with a confidence that never doubts;—of "Our Father" what can they have known? Then in the simple petitions that follow how are life's homeliest, yet its most pressing needs grouped, though at the same time with recognition of those great things which are to be united always with that which is personal to ourselves, and comprehending in a single petition that which is worthiest of God and that which is most momentous to man.

But there was to be more than even this is the ideal of Christian prayer. Has the reader ever given particular attention to the emphasis in that discourse of Jesus at the last supper, recorded in the fifteenth and sixteenth of John, put upon prayer, and upon that fellowship with the Father and the Son which the prayer as described necessarily implies? This was because there was now a new thing to be learned as to what Christian prayer itself should be. "Hitherto," said Jesus, "ye have asked nothing in my name." Again and again he calls their attention to this new thing in prayer which was thenceforth to be so much the great thing—"in my name." That great word "whatsoever" comes in that connection. Thenceforth Christian prayer, addressed to the Father in the name of Christ, was to be the marked feature of this new religion. Through the medium of such prayer to be always in fellowship with the Son as with the Father was thenceforth to be the great aspiration of the Christian soul.—and herein was to be that "secret of the Lord" whose manifestation to the world should be the kingdom of God "coming" and spreading in answer to Christian prayer.—*The Standard*

A Cure for Church Quarrels.

The cure for church dissensions is not in cauterizing them; not in denouncing evil in the abstract. As a great English statesman said. "He that only attacks sin in the abstract, will never die a martyr." Nor will these blisters on the heart be removed by committees of adjustment, measuring motives and suggesting expediencies, but only by more love to Christ.

In one of the lectures of Dr. Breckinridge, in Danville Seminary, the subject of church quarrels came under review. One of the students said: "What would you do in a church row to restore peace, and remove scandals?" Said he:

"I will give my method in such a case, which occured in the church where I was born. While a pastor in Baltimore, I received a letter urging me to return to Kentucky, to the church of my birth and family, to settle a feud which threatened its existence, if not the lives of some of its members. It was thought that, being a child of that church, and friendly to all, I might do something to save it. I wrote the facts to Dr. David Nelson, the great revivalist, and begged him, for Christ's sake, to go with me to heal the troubles, if possible. He replied, not saying a word about the difficulties, but appointing a protracted meeting, and saying that he would meet me there. Nothing more was ever said as to dissensions. David Nelson disposed of all these in his protracted meeting, in which multitudes were converted to God." Strife melted away before an awakened sense of the love of God to dying men, and hid itself in the shadows of the pit.

Where there is a unity of effort and of worthy purpose, oneness of feeling will not be wanting. If the iron is heated, the parts will weld. We may reach an agreement on equities, but must for peace and love have more of the unifying touch and fire of the Spirit, just as nature must have the mission of the sunbeam upon the rain.

Peace by conquest is what we need. Unity in effort to save men will dissolve all discords. The church that lacks this unity of constant effort is merely a congregation. A State charter and a board of trustees are about all the signs of existence which it possesses. If it lives, it must be aroused from its torpor by the startling challenge, "If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit," then by the mastery of these spiritual forces, "be of one mind."

Beware of the unity of slumber. A whole city is peaceful when deep sleep falls upon it. This is not what the apostle meant, but rather a unity marked by the most intense activity. Busy unity is what the church, wants working together in building the temple of God.

There are two demons ever ready to disturb the peace of God in the soul, pride and selfishness, which are ever exciting strife. They are p nts, born of the flesh. Even a feeling of personal unworthiness is sometime to be distrusted, for it may live in a heart as Lucifer. It may get one on his knees at the Lord's Supper, but pride may still be in the heart. A torpid liver will give a sense of unworthiness, but biliousness does not fit men for the kingdom of heaven.

Do Something.

You are not here to vegetate or to dream; you were born to act. Every man coming into the world is furnished with a commission of service. That you are here is evidence that a work awaits you, for the great Master send no one into the field save to find his task and to fall into line with the reapers Service is the key to a human life; all else is subsidiary, mere by-play. So you perform the allotted task, you shall, at set of sun, hear the "well done," and receive the accustomed "penny." Blessed are those servants who, when the Master of the harvest calls, shall be found, sickle in hand, among the stalks of golden grain!

But, sad to tell, not all perform the tasks assigned them in the divine order; and, what is more strange, it is not always the bad who refuse to recognize the divine command, that fail to do their work; it is often the well meaning men who recognize the obligation and intend to discharge the duty. Simply they do not do it. They dream of doing, without ever taking the task in hand. The reasons for not doing are various; often plain, but sometimes obscure, to the individual himself, and possibly such as he would not venture to put in words. Some never get ready. They imitate the bobolink, which persistently swings on his "briar or weed," ever ready to mount, making many attempts, while remaining an inveterate procrastinator. The intentions of such people are good, but they are never effectuated in action. Others fail to perceive just what duty is. They may never see until they begin to act; the first step will make clear the second. They may never have an outline of duty ten miles ahead, and because not thus favored, they refuse to do anything. There are those who do not like the tasks assigned them. If they were called to something else, if the task of some other had been assigned to them, they would be valiant soldiers. Still others fail because they do not like the regiment into which they were mustered. That you are there is a reason why you should fight there. Providence often selects our associates in service, and such selections are usually the best. To get out of these relations is too often to get out of the service. But be sure to do something, and begin to-day. Delay means failure. —*Zion's Herald,*

Every time sreasure is laid up in heaven it does somebody good on earth.

It is only the truth we follow that has power to lead us straight to God.

If we make religion our business, God will make it our blessedness.—*H. G. J. Adams.*

He who sists at Christ's feet here shall sit on his throne hereafter.—*Matthew Henry.*

Worshipful Giving.

Such giving is that in which God is worshiped. Is such giving a possibility? If so, is it a duty and privilege? Yes; it is as much a duty and a privilege to worship God sincerely while giving to him of our means as it is to worship him in song or prayer. This is the plain teaching of the Scriptures. Our offerings on the Lord's Day should be made in the same spirit in which we praise him in song or bow before him at a throne of grace.

The angel said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers *and thine alms* are come up for a memorial before God." Not the prayers alone, but his prayers and his alms, or gifts. The two acts of worship went together. The trouble with many professing Christians of to-day is that, although they can pray devoutly enough, they seem to think that worship has taken a recess when the time for the collection comes.

Very few regard the offering as, equally with prayer or praise, an act of worship. Yet such it is. It is so represented throughout the Scriptures. The high priest offered *gifts* as well as *sacrifices* to the Lord. Similar to this is the New Testament injunction, "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

In the church service the collection, or, as it may better be called, the offering, is as much a part of the worship of the Lord in the service of his day and house as the reading of the Scriptures or the singing of hymns. "Honoring the Lord with our substance and with the first fruits of all our increase" is of as much importance as honoring him with our words, and often a much surer test of our sincerity.—*Telescope*

Spiritual Sunshine.

Sunshine in the lives of Christian believers is just as potent in the spiritual realm as is the sunshine that drives darkness from our world and brings that warmth which is so essential to life and growth in the vegetable kingdom. There is a winning and vivifying power in spiritual sunshine; for, as has been well said, men and women, youth and children, see the friendship of the sunny faced. All doors open to those who smile. All social circles welcome cheerfulness. A sunny face is an open sesame to hearts and homes. By it burdens are lightened, care dispelled, sorrows banished, and hope made to reign triumphant where fear, and doubt, and despondency held high carnival. Your own life will be sweetened, your own joys heightened, by your perennial, heaven-lighted, sunny face. Get the glow and radiance from such nearness to the throne as God permits to his own. Bring from a holy and divine communion a face luminous with happiness, and let it glow and shine on all around.

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Random Readings.

A handful of help is worth a cartload of pity.

Be not simply good—be good for something."

Any life that is worth living must be a struggle.—*Dean Standley.*

A YOUNG LAD AND HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND.

Ernest McGregor, of Whitby, Ont., Gives an Account of his Experience. Cured of Persistent Dyspepsia by B. B. B.

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