In Disguise.

I met him to-day in the wintry street,
The Christ on the cross who died,
All hungered and cold in the wind and sleet,
With bleeding forehead, and hands and feet,
And I blindly thrust him aside.

Had he only come with the crown of thorns,
Or the nail-prints ruby-red—
Had the palms that pleaded for alms but worn
Their wounds, I had not put by in scorn
His piteous plea for bread.

But idly now and all in vain
I grieve for the grace gone by,
And muse, "Might he only come again,
I'd pity his plea and ease his pain,
And hearken unto his cry."

Nay, nay, for the blind distinguisheth
The king with his robe and crown;
But only the humble eye of faith
Beholdeth Jesus of Nazareth
In the beggar's tattered gown.

I saw him not in the mendicant,
And I heeded not his cry;
Now Christ in his infinite mercy grant
That the prayer I say in my day of want,
Be not in scorn put by.

—British Weekly.

To What Purpose?

Nothing is more common in fervent prayers than the petition for a blessing from God. He is besought to pour out an immediate and abundant blessing upon all hearts. It is spoken of as something to be greatly desired, to be thoroughly enjoyed, to be intensely grateful for. Meetings on which the blessing does no descend are considered as failures. What is the thought that commonly lies back of the petition? To what purpose is it offered?

It is quite probable that if we could know the consciousness of those who most frequently and fervently pray for a blessing from God, we should find that it meant nothing more nor less than an asking for a pleasurable emotion, or a delightful feeling. A consciousness of the divine approval, and of communion with God is, of course, a perfectly legitimate experience; but one who does not get beyond it is not likely to become the most useful kind of Christian.

The blessing of God comes in many forms. It comes as truly in an added weight of personal obligation, a new impulse to hard and disagreeable duty, an opening of opportunities for personal service and sacrifice, as it does in that access of feeling which makes men want to sing like seraphs and shout praises forevermore. That ecstatic state may be the state of the redeemed in Heaven, but there is something more for the redeemed of the earth. They have not yet entered the glorified state. There is much work for them yet to do, and they need grace and strength and wisdom and perseverance if they are to accomplish it.

The blessing of God is upon him who has a clearer view of duty, a stronger resolution to perform it, a firmer purpose to sacrifice his own love of ease and of the agreeable for the benefit of others; who wants more strength that he may do more work, more wisdom that he may do better work, more faith that he may persist in work despite discouragements, more grace that his own life may be as a lamp to other's feet. Christ prayed in this spirit when he asked the Father to glorify him. And how was that prayer answered? He went from the place of prayer to the Garden of Gethsemane and was there betrayed, and was tried and crucified. Where was the glory? In the obedience of his suffering. His whole pathway from the Garden to the grave was a pathway of glory. The blessing of God marked it out and enabled him to follow it. He was blessed that he might become the Redeemer of the world. He asked for glory, and God gave him death. But was not death for the saving of the world the way of glory?

God wants men to enjoy his service; but he wants the service. There is a great work to be done. That was the constant thought of Christ; and he was straitened, he said, until it should be accomplished. Did not angels minister unto him? Yes. Was he not transfigured? He was. But the great characteristic of his life was not his moments of great exaltation, but his hours and days of work. It was work, work, work! He worked until he was weary, he worked until he was faint. He was always doing something, and always doing something for others, for those who had no claim upon him.

What do we want divine blessings for? Just for ourselves? The miser gathers gold that he may secretly gloat over it, and it becomes his curse. God is a blessing for good uses; but as a god it is sordid, soul-destroying. The rich man joins field to field, and million to million, and says: "It is all mine, it is a great blessing." Not so; it is a curse to him. The devotee puts aside all the world and all the claims of the world, and shuts himself up to contemplation of God and a continual effort to enlarge, and free his spirit by mortifying the body. He prays without ceasing. It is all vain; all that he accumulates is spiritual poverty. You cannot cheat God

Here is a man who spends his life gathering the finest and best of carpenter's tools. He has whole chests full of them. He takes them out every day, oils them lest they rust, sharpens them, wraps them in chamois, and puts them back in their places. Of what earthly use are his saws and planes and chisels? They might as well be old scraps of iron in the refuse heap. His tools are a curse to him, unless he puts them to use and with them builds houses and churches and halls and shops. A saw is an opportunity, a plane means duty, a chisel is obligation.

God's best and highest blessings are not for private delectation, but for service. Ask wisdom that you may be better fitted for work; seek strength, that you may expend it in a complishment; pray for grace, that you may do what you have to do in God's way. Go not up to Pisgah's top if you mean to shut your eyes when you get there, fold your arms, close your ears and dream idle dreams.—The Independent.

The Sin of Evil Speaking.

The exhortation, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile," needs to be uttered again and again with increasing emphasis The reason is that in a large measure men are the custodians of one another's reputation, and an evil word spoken against a man, even though it be wholly untrue, and his character irreproachable, has a blighting effect upon his reputation. There are always those who seize every depreciatory word uttered against another with an eagerness and avidity that seems to indicate that they would rather learn evil than good of him. Then there are others who seem to regard it as their special mission to give wider currency to any evil word or suggestion that they may have heard concerning a person. And if the one criticised is in a high position, the more eagerly do they lend themselves to the wider utterance of the original slander. And if it should not have all the elements necessary to arouse the suspicions of the curious, and to satisfy the abnormal desires of the perverted, they do not hesitate to supply whatever may be lacking to give the story wings large and strong enough to carry it on its unhallowed journey.

The pity of it is that there are persons in nearly every community who are always seeking for an ulterior motive in the conduct of others, and who would rather give expression to calumny, open or implied, than to credit others with sincere intentions. Sometimes these wicked defamers of their brethren are found in the church, not unfrequently in official positions, and by their unfriendly speech and manner are a serious hindrance to the work of the church. Better open hostility than the undermining opposition that results from evil speaking. The best work of a pastor may be swept away in a moment by the breath of evil speech, just as the toil of the farmer may be brought to naught and his hopes of success wrecked by the sudden sweep of the cyclone.

Evil speaking emanates from the "father of lies," whom Christian people are never to take as a guide and inspiration, either of speech or life. The gentle Christ, whose we are, and whom we serve, had so exalted an estimate of the reputations of men that he endured the contradiction of sinners, and kept silent under the greatest provocation. He might have uttered terrible things about those who persecuted, slandered, reviled, and insulted him; but no word of slander escaped His lips. His denunciatory speeches were directed against the hypocrites, but even in these utterances there is a flavor of charity.

It is probably true that much of the current unkind criticism is expressed unintentionally, and perhaps unconsciously. This may be mentioned in explanation of its origin, but cannot be accepted in exulpation of the detractor, or in extenuation of his sin. The man who holds the reputation of his brother so lightly as to say, even unconsciously, the things that will injure him, is hardly a safe man. If anything should be guarded zealously, it is the reputation of other persons, and the man who has so low a regard for the reputation of another that he will assail it himself, is sure to have his own reputation held in like esteem by others; for there is a reciprocal element in public opinion, which delights to honor those who guard the good names of others as a sacred heritage; and that puts under a severe condemnation those who cast discredit upon the reputations of others, which are intrusted to their care.

One of the constituents of pure and undefiled religion is to keep one's self unspotted from the world. This must be done in many ways, because the taint of worldliness has many sources, one of the chief being the wicked proneness to uncharitableness of act and speech. If one is not disposed to speak well of another, he should at least refrain from speaking ill of him, in spite of the fact that there may be great provocation to do so. An evil speaking tongue is a sure index of a low state of religion, for as St. James so aptly and truthfully says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."—Chris. Advocate.

Prayer For Individual Conversion

Norman Smith, Jr., of Hartford, Conn., was accustomed to take part of the apprentics whom he had in business into his family, that he might watch over their moral and religious welfare. They were always present at family worship. He had occasion to leave home for a week or ten days, and his wife, who had been seaching her heart of late, and endeavoring to make a perfect consecration of herself to the Lord, suddenly found this question raised in her mind, "Are you willing to pray in your family during the absence of your husband?" She shrank from such a trial, for she was young, her disposition was retiring and timid, and the apprentices were from sixteen to twenty years of age. Her mental distress was great, but she wisely carried the matter before the Lord. Leaving all her household matters with her widowed mother, who resided with her, she gave up the day to prayer from the morning hour, and it was not till late in the afternoon that, alone in her room with God, she felt that she had gained the victory and was prepared for the dreaded duty.

Then great peace came into her soul at once, and she realized the privilege of presenting those young men to God in prayer. To use her own words, "In the morning worship I had only to open my mouth, and God filled it. The room, and even the house, seemed so full of God that it was impressed on my mind that God was willing to do a work in the famliy. So I invited Dr. E. P. Barrows to call, at tea time, and converse with the young men. He did so, and one of them gave his heart to God during his conversation; and before the week was out two others did the same, as did three of their companions in the next house. One of them soon began to prepare for the ministry, and is now a settled pastor." When her husband returned to the city, he did not follow his usual custom of going first to the store, but came directly to the house. Mrs Smith said to him: "I am afraid you will not believe what has taken place in the family during your absence, if I tell you." He replied: "I am prepared to believe anything; for my mental exercises were such, while I was away, that I knew that something had taken place, and I came directly to the house, without going to the store, that I might learn what had occurred." And this was the beginning of a precious revival of religion.

Mrs. Smith not many years after that was left a widow, with three young daughters. She says: I had an uncommon burden for the early conversion of my children. I retired every evening, to my room for special prayer on this subject. One night, while I was pleading for covenant blessings upon them, a voice seemed to speak to me, 'If you have evidence that you are a child of God, then you have a right to the blessings of the covenant for your children.' I said 'Yes Lord, I am Thine,' and then I pleaded for my children. I did not expect an immediate answer, yet it was but a short time before they were all converted by the quiet leading of the Spirit." And that mother's prayer continued to be answered in the use to which God put these daughters. One became the wife of a minister of Christ; a second was the widely known Mrs. Marshall O. Roberts, of New York city, whose spiritual character and extended Christian influence in a high social position were of such value; and the third has pursued quiet walks of usefulness amid the churches and Christian enterprises of her native city —William W. Patton, D. D., in "Prayer and Its Remarkable Answers."

Figs and Thistles.

God never made a cow that gave milk punch.

Each drunkard's wife knows there is a devil.

Before we can live right we must first love right.

The best preaching is not always done in the pulpit.

Perfect peace is always the result of perfect trust in God.

Christ did not come into the world to reform it, but to give it his own life.

The Christian should keep out of the path in which he cannot find the footprints of his Lord.

Whoever sows good seed, has God's word for a good crop.

Sheep are sometimes taken over a bad road to a good pasture.

When we grumble much it is a sure sign that we pray too little.

Many a man wants better preaching, who has no wish for better living.

The saloon will go in a hurry when the church gets after it in earnest.

It is easier for water to run up hill than for a selfish man to be happy.

You've read the Bible with the commentary, now read it with the spring —The Ram's Horn.

How to Prepare for Death.

To prepare for death does not make a convent necessary. We do not need to go into a cell and mortify the flesh and conjure up ghostly sights and drown all the voices by which our senses speak to us.

To prepare for death is to do one's ordinary work faithfully and one's whole duty nobly. To prepare for death is to trade honestly, to give cheerfully, and study faithfully, to speak kindly, to smile cheerily. To prepare for death is not to chase one bright thing from life's pathway, is not to ignore one strong affection, it is not to give up one true pleasure, it is not to make one sweet thing sour, or to make believe that a bitter thing is pleasant to take. That is the glorious side of this truth. The Christian watchfulness which our Lord commands is not a timid, twittering apprehensiveness. It does not mean that we shall constantly be asking in awe-struck whispers, "Is he coming? Is he coming?" This watchfulness simply means that we faithfully are doing our every-day duty every day.—Rev. F. E. Clark.

How Many Bible Promises.

Often I have heard this statement, "There are thirty thousand promises in the Bible.' Those who make this statement of course believe it to be correct, but perhaps a fact or two will help them to see that it can hardly be true. The whole Bible contains 31,173 verses. I suppose that this is the reason for saying that there are thirty thousand promises in the Bible, as the verses in the Bible number, in round figures, about thirty thousand. But we should remember that a large part of the Bible consists of history, denunciation against sin, long chapters of hard names, so that it will be quite difficult to get thirty thousand promises out of only 31,173 verses. It is true that all verses in the sacred Scriptures point to Christ, so that there is no portion of them but what is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, and for instruction in righteousness; but to make the sweeping statement publicly that there are thirty thousand promises in the Bible is not quite what careful students of God's Book will want to do. There are "exceeding great and precious promises" for every child of God, and enough of them to save us from our sins, keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the throne of our King in the eternal home; but nothing is gained to the cause of truth by making careless, exaggerated statements, which, when submitted to the slightest investigation, prove to be untrue.—Gleams of the Morning.

Forms of Religion.

All true religion must and will have some outward expression or form, but we must be careful that it does not become all form. We cannot grow corn without the husk, but we must be careful that we do not grow all husk. Many a time in husking corn in my boyhood days, after going to the trouble of tearing away abundance of husk, I have found an almost empty cob with only a few grains of defective corn. Forms are to religion just what the husk is to the corn and what the shell is to the oyster. But as we would not be satisfied with all husk or all shell, so let us not be satisfied with all form and no religion.—Standard.

The New Minister.

A minister who had just entered upon his work in a new parish in the west of England was told that an old man in his parish was of an exceedingly crusty disposition, so he determined to make friends with him the first opportunity he had. Overtaking him in the village one day, he said, "This is cold weather, John."

Receiving no reply, he tried again, "I said this is cold weather, John."

Turning angrily around, the old man replied, "Well, who said it warn't? D'ye ye want to argy the p'int?'

Let The Arrow Be Pointed.

"It is a poor sermon," says George Whitfield, "that gives no offense—that neither makes the hearer displeased with himself nor with the preacher."

It was a noble eulogium that Louis XIV passed on one of his preachers, Masillion: "I don't know how it is; when I hear my other chaplains I admire them, but when I hear Masillion I always go away dissatisfied with myself."—Religious Telescope.

Good Things To Learn.

Learn to attend strictly to your own business. Very important point.

Learn how to tell a story. A well-told story is as welcome as a sunbeam in a sick-room.

Learn to stop croaking. If you can not see any good in this world keep the bad to yourself.

Learn to keep your own troubles to yourself. The world is too busy to care for your ills and sorrows.

Learn to greet your friends with a smile. They carry too many frowns in their own hearts to be bothered with any of yours.

SPIRITUAL HOUSEKEEPING.—Very often a general lack of interest in religious meetings means a lack of painstaking preparation on the part of those who conduct or take part in them. Impromptu work has killed many a meeting, where the "level best" of those concerned would have made it a refreshing feast. The difference between an indifferent appetite and a keen relish for food depends sometimes upon the housekeeper. If she is guilty of slovenly neglect of the details of kitchen and dining-room, the the morning appetite may go a glimmering in the presence of untidy surroundings, and badly prepared and served food. On the other hand a cheerful atmosphere, dainty appointments, and delicate taste in cooking, will tone up the weakest appetite. We are serving the Lord's tables. Conscientious, loving thoroughness in service may be the measure of the appetite for the bounties of his house. —S. S. Times.

It is the hardest thing in the grammar of life to learn to put "mine" and "thine" in just the right place. That is life's lesson. Paul had learned it when he said, "Ye are not your own," and when he stood on that deck in the storm and said, "God, whose I am and whom I serve." The Christian man is the man who has found to whom he belongs. The world wants men who know where they belong, and to whom they belong.—W. W. Moore.

If You Wish to be Well

You must fortify your system against the attacks of disease. Your blood must be kept pure, your stomach and digestive organs in order, your appetite good. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the medicine to build you up, purify and enrich your blood and give you strength. It creates an appetite and gives digestive power.

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Catch Cold.

It's an easy thing to do, but it's just as easy to get cured if you take Norway Pine Syrup. Costs only 25c. at all drug stores.

Cannot Be Beat.—Mr. D. Steinbach, Zurich, writes:—"I have used Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil in my family for a number of years, and I can safely say that it cannot be beat for the cure of croup, fresh cuts and sprains. My little boy has had attacks of croup several times, and one dose of Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil was sufficient for a perfect cure. I take great pleasure in recommending it as a family medicine, and I would not be without a bottle in my house.

FACE HUMORS

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EVERY HUMOR From Pimples to Scrofula cured by CUTICURA REMEDIES.

A NURSE'S STORY.

Tells how she was cured of Heart and Nerve Troubles.

The onerous duties that fall to the lot of a nurse, the worry, care, loss of sleep, irregularity of meals soon tell on the nervous system and undermine the health. Mrs. H. L. Menzies, a professional nurse living at the Corner of Wellington and King Streets, Brantford, Ont., states her

case as follows: "For the past three years I have suffered from weakness, shortness of breath and palpitation of the heart. The least excitement would make my heart flutter, and at night I even found it difficult to sleep. After I got Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills I experienced great relief, and on continuing their use the improvement has been marked until now all the old symptoms are gone and I am completely cured."

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