

IMPORTUNITY.

It has many times seemed to me that it was not for the very plain and emphatic teaching of our Lord on the subject, importunity in prayer would appear fearful and presumptuous. Think of man, the sinful creature of a day, coming into the presence of the Infinite and the Holy One! Shall he dare press his suit? Shall he argue and entreat in such a presence? Jesus, in the parable of the unjust judge answers. But what is importunity? It is intensity of soul. Not always noisy, vehement speech; sometimes voiceless. Years ago I heard from an eloquent preacher an illustration of this point, that appeared then and has ever since seemed beautiful to me.

A worthy man had a sick wife. She was taken suddenly and alarmingly ill. It was night, but the anxious husband started for a physician in a neighboring town. On reaching the doctor's house late at night, he rang the door bell, and the doctor, putting his head out of his window, asked his errand. He told him of the sickness, and entreated the doctor to go with him at once. "I can't," said the doctor; "I was out all last night, and I have just gone to bed. I can't go; there is a doctor across the way who will do just as well." So saying he closed the window, and went back to bed. But he could not sleep, for he heard right beneath his window on the sidewalk the steps of one walking to and fro. At length, springing from bed and opening the window, he saw it was the very man who had aroused him an hour before. Putting his head out, he said, "What are you still there?" With choked utterance the man replied, "Yes, doctor, I am here. I need you. I cannot go without you. I can not." "Well," said the doctor, "wait till I dress, and I'll go." That was importunity—intense, but noiseless—and it prevailed.

So importunity in prayer is sometimes the foothold of the soul as it silently paces beneath the windows of Heaven. God readeth our hearts.—Rev. Wm. Lamson.

SAN FRANCISCO SHAME.

San Francisco, not content with 2,100 more saloons than it has churches, has recently extended the hour that they may hold open to two o'clock a. m., which gives them twenty hours each day to make drunkards. The cup of its iniquity was full, one would think, when the disastrous earthquake and fire came last April. Then for two and a half months, under the orders of General Funston, absolute Prohibition reigned, and for the first time in fifty years human life was safe in that town. The police and police courts were practically idle. Then came the re-opening of the saloons, the tragedy of the city's history, since which hundreds have been before the police courts daily, and murder, theft and all manner of wickedness has been rampant. Before this awful deluge of crime the police force has been overwhelmed and comparatively powerless. The re-opening of the saloons has been at the demand of corrupt politicians. The city is thoroughly honey-combed with political rotteness. As a result, as we believe, the town has met with calamity after calamity. A street-car strike resulted in the loss of millions of dollars and many lives. Then came another disastrous fire, and last week the town was visited with a terrific wind storm that leveled many buildings and resulted in the loss of many lives. But earthquake, fire and desolating storms seem unable to show that afflicted community that the God who overthrew Sodom and the cities of the plain still sits upon His throne, and still views sin with abhorrence. What more must God do to bring that people to their right senses?

INDIA'S FAITHFUL WOMEN.

Pandita Ramabai, the Hindu widow of India, who from the oppressed and burdened position of a widow in India which means so much there, has risen to a place where she cares for 1600 child widows teaching them the principles of the Christian Religion, has recently experienced in her homes a great revival.

As a result she is planning to open twenty mission stations in different villages where her converted girls can go and hold services. This, we understand she is doing by faith, as she some time ago refused support in the regular way from the boards.—Sel.

I'LL TAKE WHAT FATHER TAKES.

Near the close of a lovely June day a company of brilliant men gathered at a garden banquet. The pavilion was set among beds of flowers, and opened toward the west.

The table was a dream of beauty with its fruits and flowers, its flashing glass and glittering silver. Some of the noblest of the land sat around the board. Among them was an eager, bright-eyed boy, brought to his first club dinner by his father, an honored judge.

Wit and wisdom sparkled back and forth and wine gleamed like ruby and amber. The boy saw and heard everything. This was an enchanted land. For the first time he looked upon the faces and heard the voices of great men who had been his heroes from afar. Their words, their bearing, their dress, were full of interest. Yet of all this goodly company, to him his father was the king.

An empty glass stood by his plate—a dainty shell with points that caught the light like diamonds. A waiter stopped beside him with a tray of costly drinks and named them over glibly, questioning: "What will you take?"

The judge was an abstainer at home. The boy had never tasted wine. The names were strange to him. But he said with ready confidence, "I'll take what father takes." The father heard. The glass in his uplifted hand shed over it a crimson light like blood. All eyes were upon him. Was he afraid to drink? In a swift vision he saw the serpent in the cup. For policy, for pride, for social custom should he set this deadly thing upon his best beloved? There was a hush as he set down the untasted wine and said distinctly, "I'll take water—cold water."—Crusader's Monthly.

THE GIVER AND THE GIFT.

Two men agreed to present their wives with a like Christmas gift, a \$500 seal skin saccue—they were carefully selected and were pronounced beautiful. One of the wives in receiving the gift from her husband exclaimed, "What a beauty, so nice, so rich looking. See the neatness in the working of the button-holes, and look at that collar. Did you ever see anything nicer?"

The other wife when handed her gift, with tears went to her husband and thanked him for his love and present and said, "Oh husband I am so unworthy. You are too good to me—what can I ever do to repay you for your love and affection?" and planting a kiss on his lips, she wept for joy. Can the reader note the difference between these two wives?

Such are many who seek Christ. Some are looking for the gifts, the blessings, but he who has an eye single for Christ Himself gets not only the Lover but all of His bountiful gifts. When Christ was on earth He said of some, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Let us therefore truly seek Christ for Himself alone, thereby securing all of His love in return, far richer than all of the beautiful gifts heaven is able to bestow.—Sel.

LOVING SERVICE.

A lady was walking homeward from a shopping excursion, carrying two or three packages in her hand, while by her side walked her little boy. The child was weary; the little feet began to lag, and soon a wailing cry arose:

"I'm too tired! I want somebody to let me ride home!"

The mother looked about her, but there was no street car going in her direction. She took one of the parcels and gave it to the child.

"Mamma is tired, too, and Willie must help her to get home. She is glad that she has such a brave little man to take care of her and help her to carry the bundles."

Instantly the little fellow straightened, his step quickened, and he reached for the proffered parcel, saying stoutly:

"I'll carry 'em all, mamma."

It was only the old, old lesson that our Father is always teaching us: "Is the homeward way weary? Try to lighten another's burden, and the loving service shall smooth thine own path."—Sel.

WHICH THE BETTER CHANCE?

"Well, I cannot understand why a man who has tried to lead a good moral life

should not stand a better chance of heaven than a wicked one," said a lady, a few days ago, in a conversation with others about the matter of salvation.

"Simply for this cause," answered one: "Suppose you and I wanted to go to a place of amusement, where the admission was a dollar; you have half a dollar and I have nothing. Which would stand the better chance of admission?"

"Neither."

"Just so; and, therefore, the moral man stands no better chance than the out-breaking sinner. But now suppose a kind rich person, who saw our perplexity, presented a ticket of admission to each of us at his own expense, what then?"

"Well, then, we could both go in alike; that is clear."

"Thus, when the Savior saw our perplexity, He came, He died, and thus 'obtained eternal redemption for us, and now He offers you and me a free ticket. Only take care that your half a dollar does not make you proud enough to refuse the free ticket, and so be refused admittance at last.'—Zion's Watchman.

THE GREATEST OF ALL.

My greatest loss. To lose my soul.
My greatest gain. Christ my Savior.
My greatest object. To glorify God.
My greatest prize. A crown of glory.
My greatest work. To win souls for Christ.

My greatest joy. The joy of God's salvation.

My greatest inheritance. Heaven and its glories.

My greatest neglect. To neglect so great salvation.

My greatest crime. To reject Christ, the only Savior.

My greatest privilege. Power to become a son of God.

My greatest bargain. The loss of all things to win Christ.

My greatest profit. Godliness in this life and that to come.

My greatest peace. The peace that passeth understanding.

My greatest knowledge. To know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.—Anon.

A BACKBITER.

You have all, perhaps, seen little dogs that you were in no danger of being bitten by, if you keep them in front of you, but if they could slip around to your back they would grab you by the heels. They were cowards. If you ran toward them they would run from you. The backbiter that God condemns in His Word is a person who acts very much like this little dog. It is one who is a coward and will say things about you when absent that he would not say if you were present, or as we say, say things to your back that he would not say to your face. Now such are moral cowards.

You all want to be brave. If you would be truly brave never speak a word about anyone in their absence that you would not speak if they were present.

The Bible classes a backbiter with a very bad class of people as you will find if you will read Romans 1:29, 30. Also by reading the 15th Psalm you will find that such a person cannot dwell where God is.—Sel.

A MAN WITH A LITTLE SOUL.

A man who possesses a little soul is one who imperceptibly realizes his cheapness, hence, is easily bought or sold. He is continually on the market, and can easily change or modify his position to suit the occasion. He is unstable and cannot always be depended upon. When he is needed the most he is not to be found. At other times when he is on hand, he is either not in the right mood, or else he wants to run things. He is quick to fancy and imagine that he is slighted. He is in his element when he can be "bell sheep." In many instances if he cannot be "bell sheep," he will be no sheep at all. Reader, are you like him?—Sel.

Did you ever pump water from a well when you had to work the pump handle till your arm ached before a drop came? Some people's thankfulness has to be pumped up in the same way. It is there, but it is hard to get at it. It takes much effort and a great deal of doleful creaking to bring it to the surface. How much better it is when the thanksgiving of the heart is like a living spring, welling up and overflowing in loving words and helpful deeds!—Sel.

CHRISTIANIZING CHRISTIANITY.

FRANK A. BUTTERFLY.

The religion of Jesus Christ is adapted to the needs of humanity. Heart hunger will be satisfied only when, turning from groping after vanities, the realities of vital godliness are embraced. The empty shell of ritualism and church membership will never meet the needs of the human heart. The widespread dissatisfaction with the churches today is not an evidence of a trend away from the religion of Christ, but it does indicate an awakening to the deception practiced to so great an extent in substituting a manmade article, a human invention, for the genuine religion which brings peace of mind and satisfaction for the longings and desires of the "inner man."

It is recorded of Israel that they turned aside to gods "after the imagination of their own hearts." In Christ's time Israel held tenaciously to the doctrines and forms of religion, but they rejected the one who alone is the center and substance of true religion for a Christ manufactured by themselves, after the imagination of their own hearts and minds. Because he did not fulfill ideas and realize their fleshly hopes "his own received him not." Their religion without the Christ could not endure, but crumbled of its own weight. No more will the present day Christianity succeed in winning the confidence of those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and who seek satisfaction in her stately services, splendid rituals and magnificent edifices in vain. Christianity without Christ! What a misnomer. Yet Christ is as much a stranger to large numbers of the worshippers in the churches today as in the days of his rejection. Christianity without holiness as a prominent and constantly reiterated doctrine, and as a conspicuous experience in the lives and hearts of her adherents is a Christianity without Christ. Such an institution may possess all the comforts and luxuries of worship that money can buy, its pulpit utterances may be the fruitage of education and research, its music the finest product of the most skillful artists, its splendid services the most attractive and masterful that human ingenuity can conceive, but it can never lift the world any nearer to the bosom of the Father.

A return to Christ and holiness will be a return to revival times. Men will not spend so much time and energy regulating the great evils and abuses of the day, for when the church of Jesus Christ arises from the chains and ashes of her bondage and arrays herself in the pure garments of her virginity, giant evils and abuses will flee away to the haunts of darkness like vampires before the rising of the sun.—Wesleyan Methodist.

BRAMWELL ON PRAYER.

No wonder that William Bramwell was a veritable flame of fire for God. He says:

My life is a continual prayer.
"I am contriving a way of praying more than ever. I think it possible."

"I know a man who on the bended knees of his body prays for Bristol thirteen times a day, sometimes for hours together."

"I do assure you I find it necessary to begin at five in the morning and pray at all opportunities till ten or eleven at night."

"Everything that takes place in the church or world sends us to prayer, drives us into the house—I mean into God our Savior. You know what it is to live in that holy place."

THEY CRY, THEY DIE.

The heathen are crying, the heathen are dying; they are crying piteously; they are dying hopelessly. Hear their tramp, tramp, one hundred thousand a day, sadly crying, hopelessly dying, and what are you doing to give them the gospel of salvation? while you tarry and coolly calculate as to whether it will pay, they die, without the knowledge of salvation. Hear them cry, see them die, one hundred thousand a day.—Sel.

A photograph may be the express image of the man; but we must not think of Christ as a mere photograph of God, nor even a most accurate likeness. "No man hath seen God at any time." God took visible form in the man, Jesus Christ; the only time God made himself visible to man. Christ is not merely the image of the Father but the Father made visible.—A. T. Pierson.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN.

FOR A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM.

If I were young as you are now—
No wrinkled face, no clouded brow;
I'd strive with all the strength of youth
To learn the ways of love and truth.

My eyes should read the best of books,
My friends receive the sweetest looks;
My tongue should tender words distill,
Nor speak wrong things, nor utter ill.

My mind with knowledge I would store
Wisdom to last forevermore;
My hands with loving service fill,
To do the blessed Master's will.

To God my heart should first be given,
That I might gain a home in heaven;
My feet should tread the narrow way,
And thus I'd gain eternal day.
—The Pentecost.

MOTHER'S SWEETHEART.

Mother has been very busy today and is so tired and now I hear that company is coming. Do I look presentable my little son? "Why yes, of course you do, my dear mother, you always look nice," said Douglas, who of the two boys who were left to the endowed mother, was always the more thoughtful and helpful one. His mother's friends always noticed this and were glad to see how much joy he brought into her otherwise lonely life, for the older brother was away at football or some other amusement with the boys when his study hours were over. "You always look nice," came from the depth of little Douglas' sincere heart; but as his dear mother had given him the honor of being judge he set about to look with others' eyes, for mother herself had said, "I know I look horrid," so after a minute's reflection he added with a kiss, "You always look nice to me; but maybe another dress would look better to the other people." Little reader will you try to be your mother's sweetheart and comfort her with loving words and let her know that as for you whether boy or girl, you will think more of her love than you do for her looks? I think I hear you answer "Yes" to this, for this is one way to honor her and you remember the first commandment with promise, don't you? "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord Thy God giveth thee."—Sel.

"NO ROOM IN THE INN."

"There was no room for them in the inn."

What thoughts do these words awaken in the mind? Perhaps the first may be this, that no wonder, in so great a concourse of people, of all ranks, going up to be registered for taxes, there should be no room in the inn for the poor and unpretending mother of the Savior, to be delivered of her first born child. But the second thought may be that the world is like that inn, that amidst its pomp, its magnificence, amidst the whirl and hurry of its business, amidst the marble edifices of its gigantic triumphs, amidst its enterprises, amidst the crowd and pressure of even its neediest inhabitants, there is not room for the Savior of mankind.

Upon this thought another might follow—that that inn in respect of its bustle and turmoil, is like the world. Man crowds round man, giving himself up without reserve, whether to vicious indulgences, or selfish enjoyments, or to schemes of advancement in this world, till he feels himself so dull that there is not room in him for the thought that his food and raiment, his gifts and faculties, his hopes and prospects, all that he has and all that he can ever be, came down to him from the Most High and are to be rendered up again to Him from whom they came, in thanks, in praise, and in dutiful obedience.—W. E. Gladstone.

"Sweetness of temper is a precious heritage. In its broad and deep exercise the soul's windows open toward the spice country and fill the home with perpetual delight. The fortunate possessor of a sunny soul is God's evangel in a dark world. He is a living gospel which no one will ever repudiate, and the blessedness of which all men will appreciate. The body will grow old and the smooth brow will be furrowed, but a happy disposition is an anointing to the gray crown of age. Blessed is he whose life looks out upon the land of Beulah and whose soul is responsive to the outlying vision."—Anon.