

THE HIGHER LAW.

The young man who had been examining the row of shining instruments that lined the operating room turned abruptly to the great surgeon.

"Of course you do not believe in the foolishness called prayer," he said.

"And why not?" the surgeon asked, as he held a delicate instrument critically to the light.

"What? A man with your scientific training!" the younger man exclaimed in surprise.

"And why not?" the keen-faced elderly man repeated.

"Oh, come now, doctor," the young man said, smiling. "Surely you can not believe that God would upset all the laws of nature to grant the request of some one of his creatures. You know how inexorable are the laws of nature."

"That is exactly why I believe so strongly in the efficacy of prayer." The words were spoken quietly, but with evident seriousness.

"Explain the riddle, please," the other demanded, and his manner was grave now.

"Why, that's easy enough to do," the surgeon said. "Prayer—or rather faith, which is the motive of prayer—is just as much a force of nature as gravity. The skeptics seem to think that if a prayer were answered all the laws of nature would be smashed to pieces. That is not necessarily the case. Let me illustrate: Why does this instrument that I hold in my hand not fall to the floor?"

"Why, because you are sustaining it." "Exactly. And yet the law of gravitation is not wrecked or denied. It is merely superseded for the moment by a higher law—the law of life.

"Now as we ascend in nature we find this—the basic laws of a higher plane have just this power of overruling some of the laws of a lower plane

"Gravity is the great law of the inorganic world. It is still a law in the organic world, but the great law of the organic world—the law of life—is superior to it. The plant thrusts its stem upward in the face of gravity; man walks about in defiance of it.

"Then why may there not be a law in the next plane of nature, the spiritual, that just as naturally supersedes some of the laws of the organic world? The plant reaches down into the inorganic world, and grasping the dead atoms there endows them with life and the ability to rise superior to the force of gravity. May not the spiritual world do as much for the material world without outraging a single law of nature?"

"Why—why, I guess it could," the young man stammered.

"It not only could—it does!" the surgeon declared emphatically.

"Then there is something in prayer, after all?"

"The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," the doctor quoted.

"I tell you, my friend, prayer changes things." And the young man knew from the light on the older man's face that here was one man at least for whom prayer had changed things—many things.—Youth's Companion.

REMEMBER THEY ARE CHILDREN.

How easy it is to forget that the little folk are only little folk, after all, and to treat them as if they were grown up and ought to know as much about behaviour and self-control as ourselves. The plea for the children that follows ought not to be necessary, but what parent can conscientiously say it will not?

"Don't expect too much of them; it has taken you forty years, it may be, to make you what you are, with all your lessons of experience; and I will dare say you are a faulty being at best. Above all, do not expect judgment in a child, or patience under trials. Sympathize in their mistakes and troubles; don't ridicule them. Remember not to measure a child's trials by your standard. 'As one whom his mother comforteth,' says the inspired writer, and beautifully does he convey to us the deep, faithful love that ought to be found in every woman's heart, the unfailing sympathy with all her children's griefs.

"Let the memories of their childhood be as bright as you can make them. Grant them every innocent pleasure in your power. We have often felt our temper rise to see how carelessly their little plans were thwarted by older persons, when a little trouble on their part would have given the child pleasure, the memory of which would last a lifetime.

"Lastly, don't think a child hopeless because it betrays some very bad habits. We have known children that seemed to have been born thieves and liars, so early did they display these undesirable traits; yet we have lived to see those same children become noble men and women, and ornaments to society. We must confess they had wise, affectionate parents. And whatever else you may be compelled to deny your child by your circumstances in life, given it what it most values, plenty of love."—Selected.

DYING IDOLS.

In the hills that lie fifteen or twenty miles west of Peking, there are many fine temples. A few years ago, these were thronged and famous. Now the gods are thick with dust, their fine garments, and even the paint and gilding on their faces are peeling off.

Few are the pilgrims now, for China is fast losing faith in her gods. Some of the temples are hired to foreigners, and the gods are pushed back out of the way.

The priests will not let them be taken away altogether; but in one temple, where the foreign tenant thought them too hideous, the priest agreed to have a big paper screen put up in front of them, if only there was just a small hole in front of each idol, so that he could see out.

China no longer believes in her idols as she did. She must have something to take their place; will you help to send her the knowledge of the God whom Paul preached to the idol worshippers of Athens?—Sel.

"The only preparation for the morrow is the right use of today."

"A little wrong done to another is a great wrong done to ourselves."

KEEPING HOLY THE SABBATH.

There is a distressing amount of Sabbath desecration. The day is regarded by multitudes not as a holy day, but simply as a holiday.

If the Sabbath be used only as a holiday, then, except from a merely materialistic standpoint, there might as well be no Sabbath. If men ignore God and their souls, and take the day simply for pleasure, they are none the better off, except on the animal side of life, for having a day of rest.

God meant it for more than this. He gave it to us, primarily, for our souls' needs, rather than for the sake of our bodies, although it was meant to bless us in every department of our whole being. The Sabbath is an absolute necessity if spiritual life is to be maintained in our earthly existence.

There must be special opportunity for the worship of God, not only by individuals, but by the entire Church and community. There must be the time and place for united worship and for general instruction in sacred truths.

If the world is to be won for Jesus Christ, there must be a united agreement and movement, and there is an opportunity for co-operation such as is afforded by the public gathering of God's people in his sanctuary at the hour of worship on the Sabbath.

If there is to be a Christian programme the Christian Sabbath must be maintained. If the Sabbath is destroyed, our Christian Church and civilization go down in certain and common ruin.—Herald and Presbyterian.

MAY WE COMPLAIN?

Is there ever an excuse for repining and complaining? Are burdens and privations sometimes so great that it is impossible to look up to God in trust and confidence?

If these questions had been asked of George Matheson, the famous Scottish preacher, he would have been ready with a decisive answer. He was blind, yet when he knew his work on earth was soon to end, he said: "My life has been an obstructed life, but a life of boundless sanguineness, a life of quenchless hopefulness, a life which, even at the time of abandoned work, said not 'Good night' but 'Good morning.'"

Again the question might have been asked of a missionary among the lepers in South India who became an inmate of the Leper Settlement in New Brunswick, having fallen a victim to the awful disease.

Yet he was not cast down. He said: "The cross seemed too great for me at first, but the longer I have carried it the lighter it has become. Jesus has come to carry it with me, and I have sweet fellowship with him.

"My health, no doubt, is gone, as far as this world is concerned; my wife has been called away, and I have had to leave my home and children; I am nearly blind, and I have lost my voice so that I can speak only in whispers, and I suffer considerable pain.

"Nevertheless, I am joyful and I am Christ liveth and he is doing wonderful full of hope; hope for the world, because things."—Ex.