

## THE FAMILY ALTAR.

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It is sad and greatly to be regretted that in many homes the family altar has been neglected or has fallen down completely.

No Christian can live without private and secret prayer, but this will not, indeed cannot take the place of family prayer. God ordained of old that the father should be the priest or minister at the family altar. And such was Abraham, who erected an altar unto the Lord and called upon His name as soon as he entered the promised land. And because of his faithfulness in this respect, God said "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him namely—"that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him."—(Gen. 18:18-19.)

The value of such a service, morning or evening, or both, cannot be overestimated. It calls down the blessing of Heaven; it assuages temper; it mollifies misunderstandings; it knits the family together in love and affection; it makes character and determines destiny. Who can estimate the value of the influence upon the sons and daughters of that father, long since gone home to heaven, who each morning before beginning the day's toil, would bow before God with the family, and in humble prayer devoutly ask God's blessing on all through the day. On their lives it is still like "the dew of Hermon upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Ps. 133:3.) Fathers, mothers, think of this. Your children are yet in your homes. A few more years and they will have gone forth to meet with temptations and evil influences, toils and hardships of the world. Are you, by keeping up the family altar, stamping upon their lives an influence that will be for them a stronghold and a hiding place in times of danger, and a refuge when the storms of passion rage?

The writer looks backward with joy to the family altar, in his old home, that never was neglected or broken down; where the parents commended the children to God's care and keeping, and which was the means of leading him, early in life to seek the Saviour as his own best and dearest friend. Many more can say the same. The father's and mother's prayers led them to Christ.

Many make excuses for the neglect of family worship, saying that the father has to leave his home in the early morning before the family has risen, and is absent all day. Well—then have your family worship after the evening meal when all are at home. Or others may say that the father is absent for days at a time. Then let the mother act in his place; but by all means no not neglect your family worship. Better to do without a daily meal than to neglect the family altar.

God bless you! God bless your children!

"Nothing the world can give a man can make God respect him a straw the more.

## THE SECRET OF SERVICE.

To one who asked George Muller the secret of his service, he said: "There was a day when I died, utterly died," and, as he spoke, he bent lower, until he almost touched the floor, "died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, tastes and will, died to the world, its approval or censure, died to the approval or blame of my brethren and friends, and since then I have studied only to show myself approved of God."

## WHEN THE WEATHER IS CLOUDY.

"The weather is cloudy this morning," said Maude's father.

"Why, father, the sun is shining just as bright!" cried Maude.

"O, that sun! But I mean the indoor weather."

Maude looked at her father a minute and then turned quickly away from him. She must have known what he meant.

"What is indoor weather, father?" asked her sister Madge.

"O, when anybody in the family comes to breakfast late and wishes there were something good to eat, and wishes our canary bird wouldn't make so much noise, and wishes that old school wouldn't begin so early, why, then I think the indoor weather is rather cloudy. Don't you think so, too?"

Maude looked at her father a minute and then laughed. "Father makes indoor sun shine, anyway."

Do you make indoor sunshine?—The Mayflower.

## WHAT OUR LORD WROTE IN DUST.

We have saved the soul of the man that killed,

We have turned to shrieve the thief;  
We restored the pride of the man that lied  
And gave him our belief;  
But for her that fell we have fashioned hell

With a faith all stern and just—  
It was so of old; and no man has told  
What our Lord wrote in the dust.

We have sighed betimes of our brother's crimes

And have bade them be of cheer.  
For the flesh is weak, and the soul grown meek

May yet read its title clear.  
But we draw away from the one astray,  
As the truly righteous must.  
She is cursed indeed! and we did not read  
What our Lord wrote in the dust.

For the men who thieved, and who killed,  
and lied—

Who have slain the woman's soul—  
We have worked and prayed, and have seen them made

All clean and all pure and all whole.  
But we drive her out with a righteous shout

In our Pharisaic trust.  
So the man goes free—but we did not see  
What our Lord wrote in the dust.

—Selected.

## TEMPTATIONS OF COLLEGE LIFE.

There are innumerable temptations attending college life that none may hope to escape. Even in the best of schools and under the most helpful environments temptations find their way, like the serpent in the Garden of Eden. How important it is to learn the necessity of resisting temptation in its subtlest forms, rather than to fall in with the suggestion in order to be "one with the crowd." The Sorority and fraternity, tobacco and too frequently the dance, cards and liquor are common to many colleges and universities, and it is an unusually strong minded person indeed who can "run the gauntlet" and come off unscathed, as the following by Percy G. Gross would indicate:

No reputable physician denies the harmful effects of nicotine. Wherever you find card-playing and profanity there also will tobacco abound yet more. The constant use of tobacco by students is on the increase. More than one daughter has learned the wiles of the cigarette—away at college! It's so chic, you know. Why, seventy-five per cent of the leading women in the social and literary world in America carry the cigaret case, you know. The good old pipe and the stein make dandy decorations for the "cozy corner" and the den. And if you want to be a Frat man or a Sorority girl you must be a "sport" and a "good fellow," else you will be looked upon as "poky" and a goody-goody.

So be careful where young people get their education, and surround them with all the helpful influences possible, and do not forget to pray for them often and faithfully. High school and college days are the formative period which will determine largely the whole after career. Our strong campaign should be to keep the feet of the young on the narrow way.—Wesleyan Methodist.

## THE PRAYER OF THE SERVANT.

The late General Booth, of the Salvation Army, once sent a cable, containing a Christmas message, to all the soldiers of the Salvation Army around the world. The message was in one word—"Others." An unknown writer has taken that message as the basis of a prayer for every Christian. These are three verses from it:

"Lord, help me to live from day to day  
In such a self-forgetful way,  
That even when I kneel to pray  
My prayer shall be for—OTHERS.

Help me in all the work I do  
To ever be sincere and true,  
And know that all I'd do for you  
Must needs be done for—OTHERS.

And when my work on earth is done  
And my new work in heaven's begun.  
Mal I forget the Crown I've won  
While thinking still of—OTHERS.

"It is a greater thing to try without succeeding than to succeed without trying.

"Give your tenth to the Lord, but do not stop with that when the Lord has blessed you with abundance."