

CLOSELY RELATED TO GOD.

A little boy about ten years old was standing before a shoe store on Broadway, barefooted, peering through the window, and shivering with cold.

A lady riding up the street observed the little fellow and told the driver to stop.

The lady, richly dressed, alighted from the carriage, went to the boy, and said: "My little fellow, why are you looking so earnestly in that window?"

"I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes," was the reply.

The lady took him by the hand and went into the store, and asked the proprietor if he would allow one of his clerks to go and buy half a dozen pairs of stockings for the boy.

She then asked him if he would give her a basin of water and a towel.

She took the little fellow to the back part of the store, and, removing her gloves, knelt down, washed those little feet and dried them with the towel.

By this time the young man had returned with the stockings. Placing a pair upon his feet, she gave him a pair of shoes, and tying up the remaining pairs of stockings, gave them to him, and patting him on the head, said: "I hope you now feel more comfortable."

As she turned to go, the astonished lad caught her hand, and, looking up in her face, with tears in his eyes, answered her question with these words: "Are you God's wife?"

This story suggests varied thoughts:—How could a boy grow to that age in a great city and be so ignorant? How kind of the lady thus to do! How easy to do good when one is willing, etc.

But a thought most impressive is that deep down in the heart of that poor street Arab was the feeling that any well-dressed lady who would do so kind an act as she had done must somehow and in some way be closely related to God.

What is there in our lives to suggest to those whom we meet in life relationship to Him?

And is the suggested relationship a close one or far-off cousin?—Presbyterian Record.

HOW HABITS HELP AND HINDER.

Many a youth has been hampered because of peculiarities which he has allowed to creep into his personality or manner, which, if realized by himself, might easily have been pruned and trained, had he only been taught the secret of habit-forming.

Young people do not easily realize how much a pleasant and agreeable manner has to do with success.

Everybody likes to be surrounded by agreeable people, of pleasing manners, not by those who are gruff, uncouth, peculiar and disagreeable.

We are all looking for sunshine and harmony in this world. We try to avoid the dark, damp and dismal places, and shrink from harsh, disagreeable, discordant surroundings.

Even commanding ability will not always counterbalance disagreeable peculiarities. Young men and women often wonder why they lose their situations

when they have a good education, ability and experience.

It is very often due to some striking peculiarity or unpleasant mannerism, which the employer does not like to speak about, and he finds some other excuse for filling the position with a more agreeable person.

Employers do not like to have morose or gloomy people about them. They like bright, cheerful, buoyant, sunshiny natures, that look toward the light.

Sarcastical, ironical employees, those who are always insinuating, finding fault, and making innuendoes, are never popular.

Stubborn, obstinate, self-willed people, who always want their own way, and are selfish about everything, are not wanted.

The overbold, the egotistical—those who are always bragging about what they have done and can do—are also not in favor with employers.

The tattlers, those who are always meddling and making mischief among employees, and those who are always complaining, are among the people who never get on.—Ex.

BUILDING THE FAMILY ALTAR.

By William Chalmers Covert, D.D.

To be alone with God and the family every morning for a few minutes of Bible-reading and prayer is not only a spiritual privilege without which souls die, but a certain antidote for nervous prostration and the anxieties that harden men's arteries.

It hangs around the family a curtain of spiritual defense for the day and all it brings, softening the tempers, chastening the passions and spiritualizing life. There is nothing that will operate so effectively in these directions as the family prayer.

One father in New York keeps Bibles for each member of the family in the sideboard and before breakfast is touched they all read briefly and kneel in a short prayer.

A lawyer in a suburb, with a family of lively children and but little help in the domestic work, has time only to kneel and lead his responsive company in the Lord's Prayer, but even that keeps the home unified and sweet for the day.

Another father is reading the Bible through, touching only the incidents and passages of special interest to children.

Another took a biographical reading course through the Bible, picking out the stories of heroes and leaders, and giving a few words of practical explanation.

The parables and miracles of both the Old and the New Testament are most readable at devotions where there are children and where a father or a mother shows capacity for spiritualizing the application.—Sel.

Would you know what is the masterpiece of the Holy Ghost? It is the making of saints out of sinners. To make a world out of nothing is as nothing compared with making a mind pure from all evil things and a heart clean from all acquired depravity and fit to be a companion of God so that He not only loves it but likes it.—Sel.

A COUNTRY PASTOR IN A CITY CHURCH.

In a Canadian city fair I went one day to see

Some churches I was told would be a great delight to me.

Both outwardly and inwardly with beauty they were wrought,

But in one church a vision came which furnished food for thought.

A single glance would make it clear that wealth and culture too

Belonged to those who could afford herein to rent a pew.

Each stained-glass window, with its scene, made its appeal to me,

As did the costly polished wood, and rich upholstery.

The powerful organ in the choir I gazed at from a pew,

Then forward to the platform went to get a closer view.

And then I wondered how 'twould feel if 'neath that vaulted dome

I preached to thousands gathered there instead of scores at home;

So going to the preacher's stand in vision I could see,

In gallery and audience floor the throng encircling me.

And how unto these city folk of what things shall I speak?

I tried my mem'ry to refresh in Hebrew, Syriac, Greek;

Of science and philosophy my mind made quick review,

That I might to these cultured folk prove I was cultured too.

By chance my eyes then downward glanced, and staring up at me,

"We would see Jesus, sir!" I saw, carved in mahogany.

I do not know how came those words upon that pulpit fair,

Nor if 'twas truthful sentiment of those who worshipped there;

But I do know Jesus Christ is what all classes need,

And on this vitalizing theme more pastors should them feed.

So then I prayed, "O God, forgive the human weakness shown,

And from this hour I'll strive to preach naught else but Christ alone;

Help me to speak thy loving words in deep humility,

That not the preacher, but just Christ, those in the pews may see."

—From N. Y. Observer.

A TESTIMONY IN STEWARDSHIP.

"As for myself, ever since I earned my own living, I have been at least a tither. I am no longer a tither, nor have I been for many years.

The change came about as the result of conversation with a godly woman who said that she began by tithing but gave that up when she realized that she was only a steward. Since then she said whenever she felt God was calling for more than a tenth, she always gave it.—Sel.

"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces up, snow is exhilarating there is really no such thing as bad weather—only different kinds of good weather.—John Ruskin."