

Does Prayer Avail? By William Kinsley, Author of "Man's Tomorrow," "Views on Vexed Questions," "Old Faiths and New Facts," etc. Boston, 1911. Sherman, French & Company. Pages, 157. \$1.00 net.

This volume is one of three this author is producing in which the vital elements of Christianity are discussed "along new lines," as he deems them. The first, "Man's Tomorrow," had notice in this Quarterly in July, 1911, the third is to follow, answering the question, "Was Christ Divine?" The present volume affirms the availing power of prayer on the basis of these five propositions:

"1st. That phenomena and the producing forces with their laws * * * harmonize perfectly with the Scripture view of prayer, and abound in suggestions of how God can interfere in nature without destroying any force or abrogating a single law.

"2nd. That, as a fact, he has thus actually interfered again and again.

"3rd. That it is * * * natural and reasonable to expect that he will interfere for *us*, * * *.

"4th. That he will interfere because we ask him, doing for us what otherwise he would not have done.

"5th. * * * that he will not * * * withhold any real blessing which is asked for in the right spirit, * * *."

The discussion is based on extensive reading and reflection, faces frankly and fearlessly the objections to the belief in prayer, and moves with the easy swing and buoyant style of a genuine optimist.

The "new line" of argument is that with which most are now familiar, the using of the principle of control in evolution, the facts of the new psychology and the new adjustments of the conception of God's relation to the world.

The author's conception of prayer is very inadequate, moving too much in sphere of human wish, and his repudiation of the foreknowledge of God in the interest of human freedom in prayer betrays some very loose thinking. But the discussion is a good one and will prove of great value to many whose prayer-life may have been seriously disturbed by modern science.

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