## NO ROOM FOR JESUS.

By C. F. Deems, D. D., LL. D., Church of the Strangers (Independent), N. Y.

*There was no room for them in the Inn.*—Luke iii., 7.

This is a very simple fact, most simply stated, but one which seems very touching and instructive. *For them!* Who were they? Mary and Jesus! And this statement in regard to the mother and the child is assigned as the reason why He was born in a stable and was laid by His mother in a manger, "*because* there was no room for them in the tavern."

With our culture and our knowledge of Mary and Jesus, this statement seems a record of brutality. That an honest, decent woman, travelling on business which imperial decrees made absolutely necessary, should be turned out into a stable to give birth to her first-born, strikes us as really horrible. We instinctively ask, why did not the men vacate their rooms? Why did not several of them sit up all night, if need were, so that this simple-hearted and manifestly saintly young Jewess might have the slight amelioration of respectable surroundings to her first maternal agony? You and I would have given her our apartments and taken the stable, rather than subject her to such discomfort. There was not a gentleman in Christendom who, under the circumstances, would not have vacated his chamber, even in as cold weather as we had on the night before last Christmas. But you must recollect that the occurrence in the text took place before Jesus was born. To that very Mary and that very Jesus we owe our tender regard for womanhood and childhood. The very persons against whom the doors of the humble inn of a small village in a conquered province were closed, have opened millions of hearts to humanity by clothing suffering with the garments of sanctity. The holy child Jesus has imparted an air of holiness to all infancy, and the Virgin Mother has consecrated maternity forever. When we forget all this and picture to ourselves the ever-blessed Virgin Mary stooping in agony before an inn-keeper, and begging for any humblest room he could give her, that she might bring forth her first born, it seems an intolerable idea to us that she and Joseph should have been turned from the house, and that she should have been led to a stable to fall down in the straw among the cattle. We know these rejected guests, this Mary and this Jesus; the one as the purest of women, the other as the holiest of children, both as having inspired all that is most splendid and successful in modern painting and poetry, and, as Mother and Child, the representatives of all that is loveliest in humanity and of all that is most glorious in divinity, the horizon of human vision on whose edge heaven and earth meet—Love and Power and Purity! And for these there was no room in the inn at Bethlehem! Before you utterly damn this unnamed Jewish in-keeper and his seemingly unfeeling guests, pray be reasonable, and consider three things in abatement:

1. That you bring to the judgment a culture in the humanities which you owe entirely to this Jesus, who had not yet been born; and

2. That the inn-keeper had reason for his conduct quite as valid as those which are perpetually allowed among men; and

3. That toward this very same Jesus you and I have behaved much worse than did these people whom we are so forward to denounce.

I. As to the *first*: Men are generally guilty of holding their fellows to account for a measure of light and culture which those fellow-men do not possess, but which their judges do. We must in common justice recollect that the principles taught by that child of Mary have been regenerating and reforming the world for more than eighteen centuries, and that they have made the difference between our civilization and that of the Bethlehem tavern-keeper. Honor to women, regard for children, pity for physical suffering, a high estimate of human life, and all those delicate sentiments of sensitive honor which we call chivalry, sentiments the cherishing of which makes gentlemen, and the despising of which makes blackguards—all these have been set forth and inculcated by the words and example of Jesus as they never were before. We shall be held to account for our improvement of the influence of Jesus, but the inn-keeper cannot be, for this Light which was to enlighten the Gentiles had not yet risen on the nations. It is among the rules of judgment in the court of God to hold a man responsible not for what he has not, but for what he has. We are very frequently foolish enough to reverse this plain elementary formula of justice, not only as to this inn-keeper, but also as to other men who lived before Jesus, or who, having lived since, have passed their lives outside the benign influence of His holy teachings.

II. But as to the *second*: Let us see what reasons probably influenced the inn-keeper, and whether the mass of mankind would not think those reasons quite valid.

1. He turned them off because they were not known. Go back to the spot. It is a busy time. Guests are coming. The imperial edict for the enrolment of the provinces is bringing multitudes from the country to town. At this juncture two unknown people present themselves. One is a young woman. Her condition betrays itself. Who are they? The inn-keeper does not know them. If they have come from the neighboring rural districts, why did they not remain at home at such a crisis? He does not know how far away their home is, nor what imperious business has brought them to Bethlehem, nor how innocent and ignorant this poor young woman is. A strolling couple, one being in a suspicious condition, desire to enter a respectable public house at the time of a great crowd, and the man is in such circumstances that he cannot explain the condition of his female companion. Now, under the circumstances, would not such a reception as they received in Bethlehem be awarded to persons in similiar condition at a majority of houses in Christendom on any Christmas-day?

2. Their appearance and the condition of their luggage were against them. To this day you know that men judge by appearances, and keepers of taverns, even if so stylish as our Murray Hill and Fifth Avenue, never claimed to be more than men. You know what is meant by a "carpet-bag," on one hand, and on the other by a "Saratoga trunk," and what a bid for attention a man makes by his luggage. It has always been so. Little did Joseph and Mary have. They had not expected the event to be so soon. She had brought no elegant bed-linen and fine clothes for the little stranger, if He should arrive. She wrapt Him in swaddling-clothes, rent clothes rags, poor babe, when He was born. So mean and wrinkled must the appearance of Joseph and Mary have been, that the honest inn-keeper, having regard for the feelings of self-respect which his guests cherished, would not introduce into the crowd a rustic woman about to be a mother. He had his regular customers. They were substantial citizens from the neighboring country. They were staid, respectable, conservative heads of families. They never would endure to see the plain countryman Joseph introduced with his suspicious female fellow-traveller, as they must all regard her. To bring in two strangers for a night might be to drive off a dozen good, responsible customers forever. Would not such a course of conduct be pronounced imprudent by the majority of business men in America, if considered apart from all that now hallows the names of Mary and Jesus? For you must mark that the real glory of Mary and Jesus was unknown to this tavern-keeper, and was really unsuspected.

3. Th y were poor and could not pay. It would have greatly increased the bill of a rich couple who should have demanded the turning of a guest from his apparments to make way for themselves in an emergency. Joseph and Mary had most probably not come prepared to do more than meet the mere expences of a usual and economic journey. They could not incur responsibilities. They had little money and no credit. They had fallen so low that they stood at the door of a tavern, two descendents of the most honored and triumphant of Hebrew kings, and, because these people of royal blood could not buy out the place of some guest for the night, the greatest descendants of David, the Child who was to surpass infinitely the glory of His magnificent ancestor, was compelled to find His birthplace in a stable, His first bed in a manger, and His first companions among the lowly brutes that give patient service to man. And yet the inn-keeper did but take a plain commercial view of the case. Would it "pay" to take these people in? Most obviously n ither immediately nor prospectively would it "pay," so far as the tavern-keeper could at all perceive.

III. Now in the *third* case, after you have considered the difference made in our culture by the blessed Jesus, and all the reasons which the inn-keeper had for turning Mary into the stable because he had no room for her and Jesus in the inn, before you pronounce sentence, make some little examination into the question whether we have not treated Jesus worse than He was treated in Bethlehem. The decision of that question will obviously much depend upon the space in our hearts and lives which Jesus is allowed by us to occupy. Are there not some of us who never permit Him to come upon our premises? He may be totally shut off from the life of a man, as far as man can exclude Him. So present is He everywhere among men by the power of His principles and His Spirit, that it is not possible to exclude Him utterly, and yet, so far as our responsibility is concerned, we do keep Him out to the whole extent of our failure to give Him a welcome to our thoughts, to our affections, and to our activities. Does He have ample welcome to all these departments of our existence? Does He have the chief place in our thoughts—the best place in our love—the largest place in our work? Is He welcomed and honored? What do you say my dear friends? How stands the case with you and your Lord? How long has He sought admission? Is He still standing at the door and knocking? Does He wish to be "formed within you, the hope of glory," and are you still declining to enjoy the honor of having a Nativity of Jesus in your hearts? If so, you are pursuing the course of the inn-keeper of Bethlehem, for what, perhaps, you consider the same reasons, but which I hope you will see are not at all valid or excusatory in your case, whether they were in his or not. Let us review them.

1. Jesus is kept out of your heart because you do not know Him. But you ought to know Him. Your ignorance is wilful. Recollect that He does not come unborn to you, as He did to the inn-keeper in Bethlehem. He comes to you with all His history of growth and beauty, of truth and activity, of self-denial and suffering, of love and power. Since the night His mother was sent back into a stable, He has performed miracles, opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, cleansed the skin of the leper, and made hearts that were still under the ribs of death begin again the dance of life to the music of His pulsating accents. He has walked the earth in the sight of men and in view of angels, and shown how sweet and strong and grand and good a thing a man may be. He has let light in on life, so that life may no longer be gloomy; and on immortality, so that endless existence may be no longer dreadful. He has spoken words that are known and pondered by more minds than any other utterances the world has ever heard. He has lifted the whole plane of humanity to a loftier level. He has borne the most sublime martyrdom to truth. He has survived death. He has lived *growingly* in the hearts of successive generations of men. He has changed and purified and elevated civilization. He has erected hospitals and asylums and refuges without number. He has been the world's very greatest comfort and very greatest glory. You know Him in all these particulars. He comes to you to-day bearing in His hands the credentials of eighteen centuries to His divine power to change and save, proofs beyond number of His holy gentleness and lovingness, and desire to save and elevate you. You not know Him! Then there is nothing else worth knowing! Yes, you do know Him; and, knowing, you keep Him from your heart and thought and life. The inn-keeper of Bethlehem will rise up in the judgment with many men of this generation and condemn them—because he turned away an unaccredited woman, and you reject the acknowledged Lord of glory. I beseech you do not meet that tavern-keeper at the judgment-seat. He will cry in your ears, "I shall never forget that I turned away Mary, the Mother of the Lord. But I did it ignorantly. You—you have rejected Him, and you knew it was He. O that I could have known the character of my guest, as you knew that of yours; then would my life have been made radiant by the fact that Jesus was borne in my house!" Such reproaches will be your just due. You are this day *knowingly* turning Jesus away from your door.

2. And you have the inn-keeper's second reason: it will drive other guests away. It was not certain in his case, and it is only probable in yours. Perhaps it would turn other guests out of your heart, perhaps not. If any depart because Jesus came, you ought to be glad of their departure, for the presence of Jesus is incompatible with nothing whose company you should love. Now, is your heart so full that there is no room for Jesus? No room? Full of—what? Let us look.

Here is a whole room full of the members of the large family of the Pleasures. They are many, and they are exacting. They take large space, for they live widely. Many of them are most deceptive, having stolen the garb and imitated the manners of the most reputable and solid Enjoyments. These latter are the most pleasant and among the most respectable guests that the heart can entertain. They will stay with Jesus, while those wild and giddy and profitless things you call Pleasures would better have no place in your affections. You were not born to be amused, but to be disciplined. But you have accustomed yourself to think that everything must come to you in the shape of the pleasant and agreeable. Your medicine must be cordials, your food dainties, your bed down, your very worship an entertainment, so that you will praise only that preaching that amuses you, or worship only in the church which is a perplexing cross between a temple and an opera-house. That is the good your Pleasures have done for you—stuffed you so full of sweetmeats and licorice relishes that you have no good wholesome taste for wholesome good things. Shame on you! Turn them out, and let the man of the Cross bring His pierced hands and feet and forehead into your hearts, and make your lives grand in that they house the sublime Master of Humanity.

And there is Business, taking up almost all your heart and head, and crowding you, and calling you, and bothering you, until you are so nervous that you can hardly eat or sleep. No room for Jesus and His cross and His blessed work. Reflect how often during the past year you have worked so hard through the whole week as to be wholly unable to rise on Sunday in time to attend Church-service. Recollect, if you can, how often you have carried the Saturday night's work not simply to the edge of the Holy Day, but even over into the sacred hours. What did all this say? And what said the many times in which you have hurried from your homes too soon to have prayer with your family, or have come back too late to conduct the domestic worship which should close each day? They distinctly said: "*No room in this inn for you, Jesus!*" Room for Mammon, and room for Pleasure, but no room for the blessed Saviour! Oh, my brethren, if you would let Him in, He would turn every foul visitant out, and as one of the painters has represented the manger and the stable made glorious in every part by light streaming from the figure of the Infant Saviour, so would Jesus irradiate and beautify your whole life. Room for darkness, and no room for light; room for foulness, and no room for purity; room for death, but no room for life! Every story from attic to basement crowded, and Jesus turned out into the stable! Why, you are daily repeating in most aggravating forms the slight put upon Jesus by the condemned inn-keeper of Bethlehem!

3. But the inn-keeper sent Mary to the stable because it would not be remunerative to entertain her in his house. He would have been compelled to turn out some well-known and liberally-paying guests.

But you have not his ignorance to plead. You know who it is that asks for a place in your heart. You know Him to be a Prince, for whose sake every reasonable man would think it quite the proper thing to dismiss any other guest. You know that He never took lodgings as a gratuity, that He never touched anything that was not blessed; that he never received a look of kindness, a word of love, nay, even a cup of cold water, without leaving behind him a reward worth a hundredfold more than what He received, and growing in value with the lapsing hours of life? Does not "pay" to entertain Jesus! Did you ever know a man who took Jesus into his intellect, and worked up his studies under that Great Master, and not grow in profoundness of thought and width of range of intellectual vision? Did you ever know an artist give Jesus a lodging, and not thereby have all his æsthetic nature quickened and purified and brightened? Did you ever know any man to conduct any business for Jesus, permeating his life with the spirit of Jesus, basing his plans on the principles taught by Jesus, and laying every profitable income of his trade as a tribute at the feet of Jesus, who did not thrive and increase and have happiness along the whole line of his business career? O my beloved, it may be the Christmas-tide, it may be the last Sunday of the year, Jesus begs entrance. He does come in the person of His bowed and pain-stricken mother. He comes from the Cross and from the Sepulchre, from supreme pain and lowest humiliation. From that tomb which He burst He ascended to heaven, leading captivity captive. He gave gifts to men. And thence he comes marching down the centuries. He has fed the hungry, He has healed the sick, He has released the prisoners, He has enlightened the blind, He has cheered the disconsolate, He has fathered the orphans, He has supported the martyrs, He has strengthened the confessors, He has lifted up the lowly, He has forgiven the sinners, He has raised the dead, He has brightened the grave, He has killed Death, and He has conquered Hell. He comes! His footsteps make the stairs of the ages down which He treads to glow goldenly. All the graces of heaven and earth attend Him. On his right hand is the chalice of immortality and in His left the crown of everlasting glory. His looks shoot light into the intellect and love into the heart. See! He comes to your heart, with all these blessings which He wishes to give to you. He says, "Let me enter." Will you refuse *Him*, your best friend, and give lodging to your foes? The dews of the night, nay, the frost of the winter is now on His locks, for He stood at your heart last Sunday when His Word was preached, and last Friday, the day of the week which reminds us of His death on the cross, and He cried: "Let Me in; oh, let Me in!" And *you would not*. You barred your doors and sat down with gayer guests, and kept your Saviour out. Yesterday and last night He knocked—and cried—and you said, "No room! no room!"

*Is he going away?* It may be that your years are drawing to a close. Has He grown weary of your insulting dismissals? Stop! Lord Jesus Christ! O Son of Mary, stop! Do not leave such of the readers of this page as have said to Thee "*No room!*" It must not be. I seem to hear those busy men in future knocking passionately and desperately at the gate of mercy, but without love of Jesus, and out of the solemn profoundness of eternity there comes the crushing echo, "No room!" And conscience shrieks to them, "No room! No room among the crowns and songs and glories of heaven for the hearts that had no room for Jesus!" Stay! Lord Jesus! stay, and knock and call and plead until these people shall be touched by the tender accents of Thy voice, and fly to the entrance of their hearts, and pull every bolt away and fling every door open, and fall at Thy feet and cry, "Go never more from me, O Jesus; but stay, stay with me forever, for all the room in my heart is Thine own—to have and to hold forever."

## How a Child Brought Christmas.

BY HELEN PEARSON BARNARD.

Samuel Dobson's law-office had closed, but his quill pen still rapidly tracked the white paper desert, and the new "Boy" lingered expectantly. The boy's face was prematurely old, graven line by line, from babyhood, by those grim artists, want and care. At ten, the pathetic likeness to an old man's was nearly finished.

Samuel paused so suddenly that the pen threw a blot.

"Well, what now?"

His impatience was like a shock to the bashful youth; he quailed, but seemed upheld by some purpose.

"Will I come to-morrow?"

"Why not?" curtly; "it isn't Sunday, is it?"

"No, sir, it's a holiday,"—the boy held his own bravely under the battery of Mr. Dobson's scowl—"it's Christmas."

Samuel turned to quench the blot with a square of blue, at the same time he quenched the lad's hope.

"We don't keep Christmas; come to-morrow at seven, as usual!"

A doleful expression overspread the boy's face. Care added another line; it was more like a wan little old man's as it left the law-office. Samuel pushed away his paper with an expression of annoyance. That woebegone face haunted him. Holiday! Samuel hadn't taken one for forty years; what did the boy want of one? Why couldn't he be grateful for a regular job and sure pay?

Samuel tarried long by the fire. It mattered not if he were late home, for no one awaited his coming. He was "a lodger," and took his meals "out." He used to be glad that he was unincumbered, but of late he was often lonely and discontented. Now the holidays had brought on another attack of gloom. He tried to dispel it by computing his hard-gained wealth; but his usual recreation had lost its charm.

As Samuel, bent over the dying embers, dejected and hopeless, somebody knocked. Then the door swung open, admitting two visitors—a small boy propelled by the arm of a stout woman.

"Be you Lawyer Dobbs—Sam Dobbs?" she asked loudly. "Yes, we're right!" sobbing behind the child, as if he could see from the rear!

Despite his ludicrous entrance, Samuel was struck with the boy's tranquil, gentlemanly bearing. The little cap was doffed, as if for speech, but the resonant voice interposed,—

"Well, now you're here, my dooty's done. My man can't wait, and he coming five miles out of the way to do this turn for your poor ma. I'm a-going, child."

"God-bye," Mrs. Tompkins; thank you for coming," said the little man.

Mrs. Tompkins started, but suddenly wheeled, and bore down upon him for a kiss. The boy gently proffered his hand instead. His dignity and adroit parrying of the caress greatly amused Mr. Dobson.

Mrs. Tompkins bustled out, leaving the door open. The boy closed it, then seated himself also beside the embers.

"Few people leave things as they were," he remarked, sagely. "Mother taught me to shut a door if I found it shut; and leave it open if I found it open."

This pleased the exact lawyer—it was one of his maxims that doors showed character. But his reply was harsh.

"If more mothers were as wise, boys would be less a nuisance!"

His young visitor looked surprised, then apprehensive. From his position in the chair, this atom of humanity seemed actually studying Samuel. He had peculiarly bright yet serious brown eyes, rarely combined with auburn hair. Samuel Dobson noted this with a start.

"It makes it bad for us both," observed the little fellow, at length, "your not liking boys."

"Eh! What's that?" asked Samuel.

"Because we've got to live together, I s'pose."

"What?" Samuel roused as from a dream, crying suspiciously, "Where's that woman? Whom do you belong to, child?"

The young stranger was not surprised by his excitement.

"I thought you'd be astonished!" he remarked, simply. "Seems queer, of course, after your being alone so long! Mother's letter'll tell you all about it." He calmly unpinned an inner jacket. "I'm your sister Jenny's boy."

Mr. Dobson's hand shook as he took the letter.

"Jenny! Jenny's boy! Possible you are my nephew? Yes," as the child swiftly crossed to his side, "those are Jenny's eyes. They recall happy days! Why didn't she come too, boy—nephew—what is your name?"

"I'm Harold. Mother"—his voice sank into a whisper—"couldn't come. She meant to—but she said God called her up higher. So she went. Father'd been there a long time, so it wasn't quite like going among strangers. They were both sorry to leave me, but it's only for a little while; then it I'm faithful, we'll all be together."

Never had witness poured such a testimony into the lawyer's ears; he did not cross-question or cavil; for he saw it all while the boy spoke—the woman with the glowing eyes and sunny hair entering the dark valley trustingly, even though she left her offspring behind.

"She said I'd got you to fall back upon," whispered Harold, "and we must be kind to each other."

Samuel Dobson now opened the letter. It begged him to forget that she had married against his will. "Be kind to Harold for my sake, dear brother; accept him as a Christmas gift from your loving sister, Jenny."

Samuel pondered this as he never had legal document, in silence, with knit brows. Harold retreated to the big chair, oppressed by his uncle's lack of cordiality. Here he echoed Samuel's every sigh, gazing pensively into the fire.

Did Samuel mourn his sister? Or their long estrangement? Or was he overwhelmed by the living "Christmas gift"? Any other legacy from the dead would have been treasured; why did he not draw this to his bosom? Instead, there was a fierce battle within, between the old love of kin and the miserly instincts that had been prominent for forty years. He had almost decided to send the orphan to some institution, when the child spoke:

"I'm very tired, uncle"—strangely plead ant was the new title—"can't we go home pretty soon?"

How sure of his hospitality the boy was! Samuel Dobson put off making other arrangements, and started with the child for his lodgings. He felt a strange thrill as a little hand was slipped into his, and tiny boots clattered beside his on the pavements. What small hands to support even such a tiny man! what tender feet to walk the world's rough path! Involuntarily he pressed the small palm. Harold's face lighted in a flash; he welcomed the dawn of tenderness as those who watch for the morning.

They supped at a restaurant, then went home. The boy would not have an extra bed brought. He had "often camped on a lounge." He added, "We've got to be saving, uncle, now there's two of us."

In that moment, Samuel Dobson first tasted the sweetness of success; he realized what a store he had for the "two." It pleased him that his nephew did not know of his wealth, that he cheerfully planned to watch the finances; not as a dependent, but a partner.

When Harold knelt beside the lounge, as naturally as if at home, Samuel was deeply moved. He saw himself, long ago, with fresh heart, and unwoildly lips, repeating the "Now I lay me." He had worshipped another god since, the Mammon of the Scriptures! Between that time and this was a great gulf; but across its seething waters the bark of a white-robed child had fearlessly come, bringing leaves of healing from the old life.

Now the sweet boy rose, pushed his bed close to his uncle's, and lay down contentedly. Samuel marvelled much, for children usually shrank from him. He found himself illustrating their position by the story of the lost child, who slept all night confidingly beside a shaggy bear.

Again Samuel aroused from a revery and prepared to retire. As was his custom, he hung his socks from the mantel, where they would be warm in the morning. Immediately Harold rose on his elbow with such a pleased look!

"I wanted to hang mine up," he said, "but waited for you."

"I do that every night," said Samuel.

"Every night?" in a tone of rapture. "Does Santa Claus come here so often? He only called once a year at our house. I guess I'd better be on hand with my stockings! two of them! Oh, my!"

Samuel opened his mouth to state emphatically that Santa Claus never visited there, but Harold had darted out of bed, and now two long red stockings depended from the shelf, close to his own grey socks, —banners of victory, flung out by the merry prince of Christmas, at Samuel Dobson's own fireside, silencing his bitter tongue.

"Seems more like home now, don't it, Uncle Samuel?" said the occupant of the lounge. "I hope Santa Claus knows where I've moved to!"

His uncle was noisily shaking down the stove, before putting on the smallest possible ration of coal. Then he listened without comment while Harold talked of other Christmas eves. At length, growing sleepy, he said,—

"Good night, dear uncle; please wake me after—after Santa Claus"—

While he spoke, the lids drooped, veiling those wondrous eyes. Obeying an impulse, Samuel crossed the room, and, kneeling, pressed his lips to the pure forehead. It was but natural that the orphan should murmur "Mother!" and smile; Samuel received it as a token that the boy was communing with the dead, and remained awe-struck upon his knees.

Suddenly, to this persecutor of the poor, as upon one of old, a great light streamed, and he cried,—

"I accept your gift, sweet sister; it shall be my most sacred treasure!"

Rising from his knees, Samuel quickly re-dressed, tiptoeing about that he might not waken the sleeper, and very soon joined those who haunted the stores that Christmas eve. There was an unwonted glow at his heart, the blood leaped along his veins like a young man's; his dull eye brightened, he felt the electric good cheer of the holidays; his loneliness was gone; he blessed his well-filled purse; he beamed upon acquaintance and shopkeeper, until his genial face might have been taken for the generous old Saint's.

"Harold shall say he never had such a merry Christmas!" he muttered, as he went home laden with odd-shaped bundles.

The next morning, Samuel Dobson's boy received a third shock. Samuel met him at the door.

"You needn't open the office to-day," he said. "And boy," giving him a bank bill, "get you a Christmas present."

This shock, though severe, did not add to the boy's years. He eyed his master keenly, as if doubting his sanity, but wisely accepted the money.

"It's 'nough for the whole on us!" he cried; "its a Christmas for the whole family!"

Then, fearing his master might become rational, he sped away without a backward glance.

Often in the old office is seen the figure of the dear little gentleman, Samuel Dobson's nephew,—the dying mother's gift. As he had entered his home, that Christmas eve, so had the divine Christ-child entered his heart, making its desolation blossom with "peace" and "good-will toward men!"


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