The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. J. McLEOD,] "THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."—Peter. [EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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☞ Sunday School Lesson will be found on second page.

CHRISTMAS.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

What shall I give to thee, O Lord?
The kings that came of old
Laid softly on thy cradle rude
Their myrrh, and gems, and gold.

Thy martyrs gave their hearts' warm blood;
Their ashes strewed thy way;
They spurned their lives as dreams and dust
To spread thy coming day.

We offer thee nor life nor death;
Our gifts to man we give;
Dear Lord, on this thy day of birth
Oh, what dost thou receive?

Thou knowest the sweet and precious things
My store is scant and small;
Yet wert thou here in want and woe,
Lord, I would give thee all!

Show me thyself in flesh once more;
Thy feast I long to spread:
To bring the water for thy feet,
The ointment for thy head.

There came a voice from heavenly heights:
"Unclose thine eyes and see.
Gifts to the least of those I love
Thou givest unto me."

WHY CHRISTMAS STILL IS KEPT.

BY E. P. ROE.

"Unto you is born this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord," sang the angels long ago. What significance has this message to the multitudes who will keep after their own varied fashion this birthday of a little child to whom the world gave no better refuge than a manger and stable? Pagan festivals were kept long after very many of the people became too enlightened to believe in the mythical divinities in whose honor they were established. The saints are often forgotten on saints' days, the shrewd populace having come to the conclusion that the departed worthies who died in the odor of sanctity some ages since have nothing to do with the practical life of to-day; in fact, that they could not understand the swift, imperative questions that modern men and women must answer with scarcely time between for breath.

How many will keep Christmas in the same way, scarcely giving a thought to the Nazarene who lived in an age so remote, in a land so distant, among a people so narrow and in circumstances so wholly unlike our own? Have the learned Athenians and polished Romans of to-day outgrown another myth, once a sacred and controlling belief? Why should we honor Christ more than Hercules or some other representative of humanity that pagan imagination transferred to the skies? Is he only greater in degree but the same in kind with the long succession of saints in the church he founded, saints that have vanished from the earth completely and have no more influence on modern thought and action than the angular sermons they preached and the interminable Latin books they wrote?

This is a question of fact; and to the facts we are glad to appeal for answer, especially on Christmas morning. The angels sang to the shepherds, "Unto you is born a Saviour." They went to the stable and found the Holy Child. The Child became a singularly wise and noble man, we are told, but he has been dead and buried eighteen centuries; and he is no Saviour from human ills to-day except as we follow his good advice and imitate his perfect example. We meet the skeptics at exactly this point with the counter assertion: The Christ of our faith is not dead and buried; he claimed that he came to this earth on a mission to us and to all who, like us, find more human ills than can be overcome or endured; and if we have not received practical help and aid from him then we have never received cheer and strength from anyone, and the gifts that Christmas morning brings us are "evolved," rather than given by loving friends, the friends themselves are shadows, and our own personal consciousness is to us no longer a means of knowledge. We cannot make a chemical analysis of mother love; we cannot compute exactly its intensity or its precise power; it is quite free from fossils; but many of us believe in it on this day, of all others, and we have learned to believe in it because of its various manifestations and not because it was demonstrated to us by a savant. It is a matter of experience. If another great, loving, tender-hearted Being has been manifesting himself to us for years, aiding us in our sorest need, sustaining us in our deepest trials, shall we meekly say at last, "We beg your pardon; we were mistaken; we will not trust our consciousness any more, and take other means of learning when we are cold or when warm, when a friend helps us or leaves us to ourselves?"

We believe all the facts that science establishes, but the scientist who shuns and ignores the facts of Christian experience is the bigot of the age. The angels' song is truer to day than ever, and we believe it is not because so taught or commanded by priest or theologian but because the "Saviour" still saves and the saved know it. We do not keep this day as we might honor a dead hero or an inspired teacher, who lives on through the ages only as his noble deeds or written words mould character and incite to better life. It is a festival sacred to a living Friend who proves his friendship, as do other friends, by what he does to-day and is to-day. He said to those who received him, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Does he keep his word? Millions could answer, Yes. People, too, whose testimony would be received in any court of justice.

What are skeptics going to do with this personal, living Christ! The Scribes and Pharisees sealed the stone upon his sepulcher and placed a guard about it, exultantly concluding that they had made a final end of the Nazarene. His faint-hearted followers feared that they had. If that had been the end the fact could be proved to thoughtful and enlightened minds in every age. But the trouble has ever been the same that the high-priest and his associates had to contend with—a living Christ appears. He manifests himself in just the ways he promised, and to so many in every age—to the learned, calm and strong-minded as well as to the ignorant, imaginative and weak-minded—that the truth of a living Presence, of the compassionate all-powerful divine Man, is proved, if anything can be proved, by human testimony.

Wherever, therefore, two or three children gather around a Christmas tree in the name of him of whom the angels sang, there is Christ in the midst of them.

God often lays the sum of his amazing providence in very dismal affections; as the limner, first puts on the dusky colors, on which he intends to draw the portraiture of some illustrious beauty.

THE MANGER IN BETHLEHEM ON CHRISTMAS-DAY.

The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, which stands over the reputed birth-place of Jesus, the manger in which he was laid, is known on the spot indifferently as the church of St. Helena, or the Church of the Virgin Mary. The first name is from Helena, the mother of Constantine, to whom is frequently ascribed the first church erected there, though it is not certain that one existed before Justinian. It is in possession of the Greeks, though the Latins and Armenians hold certain services there. On the north side is the Franciscan (Latin) convent, with their Church of St. Catharine; on south is the Greek convent, and on the south east that of the Armenians. Of the latter, a part, called the school of St. Jerome, is said to rest on the very foundations of the convent, in which Eusebius and Jerome ruled their monks and nuns. All these buildings communicate with each other, but the different sects are by no means friendly. A Turkish soldier, with gun and bayonet, always stands on guard at the spot of the nativity, to prevent collisions which might end in bloodshed. From the church two straightways in front of the iconostase, or picture screen, lead down into the grotto, ending at either side of the place of the nativity. This last is a semi-circular niche at the east end of the grotto, overhung with many lamps of silver and gold, which are never suffered to go out. It is paved with marble, and has in the center a silver star bearing the inscription; *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*; that is, "Here of the Virgin Mary Jesus was born." So jealous of this place are the Greeks, that the Latins are not allowed to celebrate regular mass there, thought the two other sects do it daily. The Latins, indeed, claim the right, of which the Latin inscription on the altar is testimony. It is said that the Greeks, who have kept the Latins out since 1757, stole this star in 1847, and carried it to Mar Saba, where it still is; but the Sultan at his own expense had another made, which is the one seen at present—securely belted down.

On the south side of the grotto, three paces from the place of the nativity, and just beside one of the staircases, is the manger. It is claimed to be the very manger in which Jesus was laid; and within it lies an image of the infant Christ, protected by a wire grating. The shape of the manger prevents the erection of an altar there, as at the place of the nativity; but there is one directly opposite, at the place where the magi (or, as the Latins call them, the three kings) adored. The rock is adorned here with tapestry and hung with paintings. A few feet to the west is a door of which the Latins keep the key. The Greeks can not let you through. But the Latins will let you in by a staircase down from the Church of St Catharine. You must take several turns, pass the tombs of Jerome and Eusebius, Jerome's study, the place where Joseph was directed to flee into Egypt, the place where the bodies of the children slain by Herod (the Holy Innocents) were thrown—with several other momentous spots. Then you reach the door, which the Franciscan monks will unlock for you, and you are again at the place of nativity and the manger.

The Greeks, Franciscans, and Armenians hold daily services by turns in the grotto of the nativity; and, despite all that is corrupt and sham in both the services and surroundings, these services are far from void of impressiveness. Except the prayers to the Virgin and saints, the rituals are those which have been used from the apostolic times, and which still resound, in other tongues, in the Protestant devotions of Europe and America; nor will they cease throughout the world or through the ages. In the Greek, especially, we hear the very words of the original New Testament, and of the law, the prophets, and the Psalms, in the version which Christ and the apostles read and quoted. The Greek matin service, a chorus of male voices, wholly without instrumental help, ascends nobly and sweetly from the grotto, underground to the convent roof. No one who has heard the Greek services in a Greek church needs to be pursuaded of the lofty character and effect of the vocal service in the early dawn in the grotto at Bethlehem. The rich and blending musical voices, the glorious words of scripture in the original Greek, articulated with a sweet distinctiveness that would shame many an artistic city church quartet, all rising gently and glorious with the morning, subdue the heart, and make the Protestant listener remember that here are brethren—whom may the Lord lead aright!

Christmas-day, as we reckon it, is not the Christmas of the Greeks, who still reckon in old style. But they and the Armenians have the regular service, as on other days, in an interval made for the purpose by the Latins, who celebrate it as a high day. In fact, it is the chief feast of the year in Bethlehem; and it is on this wise.

A special preparatory service is held in the Church of St. Catharine, "with solemn benediction." The day before Christmas, after midday, the Latin patriarch sets out from Jerusalem on horseback, with a numerous retiuue. On arriving at Bethlehem they are received at the plaza before the Church of St. Helena by the clergy, the Franciscans of the convent, the Seminarists, the Pilgrims, an immense throng of people, and the Turkish soldiers, which last are always needed on such occasions. As soon as the patriarch reaches the plaza he dismounts, puts on his *cappa magna*, and solemnly moves forward at the head of the procession through the Church of St. Helena, while the *Te Deum* peals forth. After the end of the entrance ceremonies, a gracious welcoming is proffered, when the clergy and people are permitted to kiss the patriarch's hand. Then the pontifical vespers are sung, after which the patriarch leads the grand procession, with processional music and services, to the several holy places. This finishes the Christmas eve service, after lasting about four hours.

The night service begins at about 10.30, and consists of the festal matutinal service, the principal office duly performed, and a festal procession down into the sacred grotto. The psalms and hymns are accompanied throughout by the organ, every other verse being recited instead of sung;—which, by the way, is always the case at the great festal services at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The reading lessons are sung by priests from all parts of the world, and vary greatly in style of singing. The principal office is "almost endlessly long, the *Gloria* alone generally lasting more than half an hour. The *Incarnatus est* ["He was made flesh"] bursts forth in a manner only to be heard and felt in Bethlehem on the night before Christmas. In the procession which follows after the principal office, the patriarch carries down in his arms, into the Holy grotto, an image of the infant Christ; the officiating deacon reading the appropriate gospel lesson. At the words, "and she brought forth her first-born son," the patriarch lays the infant Christ upon the spot of the nativity over the silver star; then, at the words, "and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger," he takes up the infant Christ again, and lays it in the manger where he leaves it lying. With this procession ends the night celebration, which has lasted about five hours.

Next begins high mass in the holy grotto, which at dawn is interrupted by the services of the Greeks and Armenians. One priest generally celebrates mass at the altar of the magi, a second at that of St. Joseph, and a third at that of the Holy Innocents; these are in the Latin part of the grotto, and go on continuously. The high mass in the grotto seldom ends before noon on Christmas day; it continues till 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

At daybreak the auroral office is held in the Church at St. Catharine, and later the second pontifical service. This, exclusive of the sermon, occupies a couple of hours. Thus the patriarch has from eleven to twelve hours of services. As there is no afternoon service, he usually returns to Jerusalem soon after midday.

The Latins greatly regret that they can not regularly perform mass in the grotto, as at Christmas time; but they console themselves by reflecting that the great crowd could not be accommodated in the grotto and St. Catherine's together; that the disrespectful behaviour of orientals in service-time is a great annoyance, as are likewise the noise and confusion, which sometimes even drown the patriarch's voice; besides which, "the bad smell is to Europeans no small objections." Says a Latin priest, also, "The music is, indeed, as a rule, quite fine, but by no means as holy so the place where the services are held." Speaking of all the hinderances, he adds, "These unfortunate circumstances cause great detriment to the Christmas festival in Bethlehem, and frighten away many from participation. The fact that the celebration is held on the very spot where was accomplished the mystery of the birth of Christ, gave it an unusual charm; the direction of the celebration by the patriarch, assisted by a numerous clergy, lends likewise an exalted character; but the circumstances just mentioned, which accompany the Christmas festival in Bethlehem, make those celebrations [that is of other countries.] far preferable."

It is even so. Bethlehem, little in itself, belongs to the precious "day of small things." "Who hath despised it" more than they who contend to give it an earthly greatness, that they themselves may lead the parade? There lay the one perfect child, in the humiliation and subjection of infancy; the divine model of those of whom are the kingdom. Who could wish that any earthly pomp should mar the sweet heavenly pattern?—*S. S. Times.*

HELEN'S CHRISTMAS QUESTION.

BY B. B.

It is Christmas Eve, and the quiet country, with the silvery moon and myriad stars above, is so cold, so bright, so still, that one can almost imagine it hears, like the shepherds of old on the birthnight of our Lord, the angel hosts of heaven proclaiming, "Good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." How different the feelings and the scene in the noisy, bustling city, with its streets ablaze with light, and filled with eager hurrying throngs, some merely gazing at the wonders so temptingly displayed in the gorgeous show windows, others attempting, half distracted by the noise, to choose the last gifts for the little stockings, already hanging at the home fireside for Santa Claus! What a mystery seems to pervade the very air on Christmas Eve, and how much it increases the enjoyment of the "merrie time!" Half the pleasure of the little folks consists in *wondering* what Santa Claus will bring. And "grown-up children," too, spend more time in similar *wondering* than they are willing to admit, and think they have learned to hide it under an assumed air of indifference which they imagine says as plainly as words, "we don't expect anything," though what long faces they would wear if the morrow brought for them no tokens of love and remembrance! In a beautiful room, made bright and charming with all that wealth directed by cultured and refined taste can procure, sits, more lovely than all, a happy mother, surrounded by her family, except the father and eldest son, who have not yet come in.

By a table sit Kate and Maud, two bright, beautiful girls,

"Standing with reluctant feet
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet."

They are busily engaged in taking the last stitches, one in a dressing-gown for father, the other in a pair of richly embroidered slippers for brother Will. The last is a rising young lawyer and the pride of the family. On the floor behind the girls sit two ruddy boys of twelve and fourteen years, giving the finishing touches to a pair of brackets made by their own skillful fingers, and designed as a grand surprise to the fondly loved mother. The boys, like the girls, are taught that a gift is prized, not for its intrinsic value, but as evidence of their skill and industry as well as affection. Ever and anon they peep furtively from their improvised hiding-place to see if "mother is watching." No; mother has learned long since that at times she must be both blind and deaf, and never betray that she sees the consternation caused by her unexpected entrance, or notices the work shoved hurriedly away, and a book hastily substituted, and studiously pursued upside down. Nor was she thrown off her guard, even on that dreadful day when little May upset Kate's basket, and displayed an exquisite lilac shawl nearly completed, but suddenly saw a marvelous dog across the street, and drew both boys to her side by her amusing comments, though they could see nothing unusual in the canine specimen. But to-night she is really and truly deaf and blind to their proceedings, so deeply is she absorbed in telling the "old, old story" of Jesus' birth, and finding by the shepherds and wise men, to Baby May, who sits on her lap, listening with deepest attention to the glowing words in which she describes the shepherds, the dear little white lambs, the wondrously brilliant star, the angel voices, and, above all, the little chubby, dimpled, darling baby on the golden straw in the manger, among the huge horned oxen. Helen, a thoughtful girl of nine, listens with wide-open eyes, as deeply interested as Baby May, for it is a story that never loses its charm. But there is the opening door, and in come father and Will just one moment too soon for the busy workers by the lamp, and under the table go dressing-gown and slippers, with just one more stitch to be put in each. Kate tosses her sunny curls, and says, "Why didn't they stay away five minutes longer?" But thoughtful Maud says, "We ought to have finished them this morning." For a while all is mirth, merriment, and noise, but Baby May soon grows weary, and, climbing again into mother's lap, begs to be told "just one time more" the story of the "wee, wee baby, and the great big oxen." All listen while the mother tells again the story to the lovely child, until at last the blue eyes close, and Baby May sleeps the happy dreamless slumber of innocent childhood. A silence falls around, which is broken by the thoughtful Helen, who says, "Mamma, I don't understand how Christmas can be Christ's birthday."

"Why not, my child?"

"Because, when *my* birthday comes, I have all the presents, and no one else has any, and on *your* birthday *you* have the gifts, and it is the same on father's and the girls' and boys', but now everybody else has presents except Jesus, and still you say it is *his* birthday. Have you got any presents ready for him?"

The boys laugh and say, "That is just like Helen, always asking odd questions. I'd like to know how anybody can give Jesus a present!"

But with tears in her eyes, the gentle mother says: "My dear little Helen, you are right. I fear we have all lavished more time and thought on gifts for each other than on those for our dear Lord Jesus, who gave even his own life for us. Each one of us should give his heart anew to Jesus on his birthday morn, resolving to seek and love him more than ever, and serve him henceforth with all our souls."

Laying his hand tenderly on Helen's fair head, her father said, "I thank you, my child, for reminding us of our duty. Truly 'out of the mouths of babes come words of wisdom.' Let us strive to make our hearts an acceptable offering by overcoming our besetting sins, and using the 'talents' committed to our keeping in his holy service. There is also another way of giving a birthday gift to our dear Jesus. Do you not remember his words, 'The poor you have always with you.' 'He that giveth to one, the least of these, giveth to me also.'"

On the hearts of all present little Helen's childlike questions sank deeply, but on none more than on the beloved eldest son, the pride of all the family. Only that day had a poor desolate widow, once the spoiled child of fortune, now on the verge of starvation, came to him with a most piteous tale of worry, and besought him, for the sake of right, to aid her in rescuing the little all of her fatherless children from wicked men. But he had turned a deaf ear to her pleading, reasoning that it would be very troublesome, would offend some high in power, and could not possibly benefit him. To another temptation he was gradually yielding: one unsuspected by his proud, loving parents, but fast gaining strength on his noble, genial nature.

Hitherto had he trusted in his own strength, reasoning that he must not bring distress and disgrace on his fond family, that he must do nothing to sully his noble name and lose his high place in the world's esteem; but now he determined to give himself wholly to Jesus as a birthday gift, and humbly as a little child implore him to give him aid to resist evil in spite of all temptation, and courage to do right in his sight, though he should thereby incur the frown of the whole world.

The practical effect of Helen's question with him was shown in the note sent the sorrowing widow that he would do all in his power to obtain justice for her, and in the decided *no* uttered to all tempting friends.

Timely and appropriate gifts from the father and mother made many a desolate and poverty-stricken home bright and happy, and the girls were like ministering angels of mercy to more than one scene of sorrow and suffering. The little boys began by dividing their Christmas marbles and toys with the poor boys of the streets; and never forgetting to prepare their hearts anew each year for a Christmas offering to the Saviour they so dearly loved, they grew to be great and good men, making the world better and holier by their noble lives.

Thus was a simple question from childish lips the source of endless good, and seemed indeed the word in season, like apples of gold in pictures of silver. To you I repeat little Helen's question, "Have you a birthday gift for Jesus?"

THE DEAD STEERSMAN.

During a very severe winter, some years ago, three men stood on the top of some high cliffs, watching the strange course of a little sailing boat on the sea below them. There was only one man on board, and he sat at the helm, apparently utterly reckless of the danger into which he was running his boat, for she seemed to be driving full on shore, at a place where it was impossible for her to escape being dashed to pieces. The men on the cliff shouted to the rash helmsman, and warned him loudly of his danger, while there was yet time to put about his helm and save his little vessel; but he seemed deaf to all warning, and faster and faster the boat rushed on to destruction, until she was hidden from their sight below the rocks. The fate of the man seemed certain, and the observers hurried down to the rocky beach beneath the cliffs, expecting to find him and his boat dashed in pieces, and marvelling over the obstinacy with which he had slighted their warnings. They found the boat and they found the man. His hand still grasped the tiller ropes; he still sat erect at his post; but it was not the crash of the wreck of his boat that killed him; he lay before them a stiff and ghastly figure, frozen to death at the helm!

Alas! how many a shipwreck has been caused by such steering in the voyage of life! Have we not seen young lives thrown away, the hopes of parents ruined, remonstrances slighted, warnings despised, and at last the poor vessel hopelessly destroyed, because of the frozen heart and soul of the man at the helm? There was an appearance of life in the case of the poor steersman; he sat erect at his place; his figure deceived them who saw him; his little boat went gaily over the bright blue waves in the sunshine; and to one who was ignorant of the danger he ran from the strong current and the rock-bound shore, the voyage seemed to be all pleasure, and yet it was too surely a voyage of death!

Such things have been in the history of a church: "I know thy works," said the Lord of Sardis of old, "that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead!" (Rev. iii. 1) It was only known to the all-seeing eye of God that the life of Sardis was but a name.

Such things have been in the history of an individual. "For to be carnally minded is death" (Rom. viii. 6). "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5. 6). The heart that is callous to all sense of duty, cold to all the love of God in Christ, hardened to fear of offending Him, paralyzed to all effort to change its perilous course, is indeed dead, though it may have a name to live. But it is not the will of God that it should perish unwarned. Whoever reads this page is warned once more, and is affectionately invited once more to come to Jesus for life and salvation.

THE "LITTLE" THINGS.

CALLA ROBERTS.

It was nearing the close of a lovely autumn day, as I entered the pleasant home of our pastor. It was a real treasure, that house! The very atmosphere was so home-like, the converse so sweet, cheery and inspiring, one always seemed to gather strength from a call there.

The wife and mother was busily sewing, and as the shining needle flashed in and out and the garment assumed proportions, our thoughts and tongues kept pace, as we chatted of our daily life—the "little" things of the kingdom—our work and needs—till nightfall warned me to turn my steps homeward.

"Wait one moment, please," said the good lady, rising to leave the room; "I have something to show you."

Returning, she laid before me a parcel, which she had sent for to a neighboring town, and received through the hands of a young sister. Asking her the amount due, she was told she "would find the bill inside." After the sister had departed, the parcel was opened, and these lines only nestled within the bright fabric:

"I hold him great who, for *love's sake*
Can *give* with wondrous hand;
Yet he who *takes* for love's sweet sake,
I think *I hold more generous still.*"

I read the words with mingled emotions, and glancing up at the dewy eyes and sweet, joyous face before me, I felt the truth, "'tis more blessed to give than to receive." It was a little act, from a quiet girl; yet her whole life was made up in such unselfish deeds—ever working, in a silent, simple way, for the Master.

I carried the incident and example home in my heart. I saw myself as in a mirror, waiting to do some great deed; to make some magnificent gift to my beloved pastor and wife; doing *nothing* because I could not do largely; while my friend and sister was dropping these little loving mementoes all along the way.

Not long since I stopped a few days with one upon whom the hand of misfortune had been heavily laid. In speaking of her trials and "counting her mercies," she said, "O the people are all so kind to me! I never knew I had such friends till trouble came." It was a delicacy sent in from one, a book from another, a cheering call on one of her dark days—all *little* things; yet such a mighty power for good, that I felt to exclaim, when *will* Christians cease to despise the "day of small things?"

Gentle readers, take this lesson home, and by influence and example, "provoke one another to good works," remembering the motto of the world's great painter, "*Trifles* make *perfection*, but *perfection is no trifle.*"—*Standard.*

GOOD NEWS FOR THIRSTY SOULS.

Let us notice once again that being thirsty is not enough. The text promises water from the fountain of life to the man that is athirst; but thirst cannot quench thirst. Some seekers act as if they thought it would. "Oh," say they, "I am not thirsty enough: I wish I felt my need more;" but, my dear friend, your thirst will not be quenched by being increased. "I should have some hope," says one, "if I were more sensible of my danger." Yet that is not a gospel hope. Why should a man's despairing because of his danger operate to deliver him from danger? As long as you stop where you are, you may get more and more sensible of danger, until you reach the sensitiveness of morbid despondency; but you will be no nearer salvation. It is not your sense of need, it is Christ's power to bless you, and your yielding yourself up to Christ, that will bring you salvation. The remedy for the thirsty soul is very plainly hinted at in the text. What does a thirsty man do to get rid of his thirst? He drinks. Perhaps there is no better representation of faith in all the Word of God than that. To drink is to receive—to take in the refreshing draught—and that is all. A man's face may be unwashed, but yet he can drink; he may be a very unworthy character, but yet a draught of water will remove his thirst. Drinking is such a remarkably easy thing, it is even more simple than eating. I heard the other day of a sad, sad case of a workman with cancer of the tongue who cannot eat. He has not taken solid victuals for six months, but still he can receive food by drinking. When people are dying you can still moisten their lips; when nothing else can possibly pass their throats they can receive liquid. So, dear soul, whatever thy state may be, thou canst surely receive Christ, for He comes to thee like a cup of cold water. Does not water run down the throat of itself? So is it with the gospel. Only be willing to open your mouth to have it, and it is yours. nothing is simpler. Sometimes divines explain faith until nobody knows what it is: and often and often I have known sinners look at their faith until they have quite forgotten to look to Jesus. This is as foolish as if a man wished to see a star, and having found a telescope, stood gazing at it instead of through it. How much he thinks of his telescope! He lengthens and shortens the tube, and examins it up and down to see whether it is a good instrument. But he does not see the star! No, and he never will till he uses the telescope properly and looks through it. Do not think of believing in your own faith, but believe in Jesus. Subordinate faith to Christ; it would be ill indeed to prefer your cup to the fountain. When you want comfort, neither muse upon your need, nor study yourself, nor weigh your faith; but set your whole mind upon Him who is heaven's glory and the sinner's only hope. The essence of faith lies in having done with self and in receiving from without, and that not by any laborious process, but as easily as men receive water by drinking. We do not drink by machinery: we just open our mouths and suffer the water to run down; even thus we receive Christ. Be willing to have grace; be ready, as it were, to imbibe it by the mouth of faith. Oh, blessed faith, which is nothing of itself and yet enriches its possessor! Oh, blessed grace, divine living water, which is ours as soon as ever we are willing to receive it!—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

GIVEN IN LOVE.

A little girl seven years old died in Philadelphia a year or two ago. When the doctor told her she could not live, she bade her mother send for the pastor of the church, and gave him her little savings bank.

"Open it," she said.

There were four dollars and a few cents.

"Take them," said the child and build a church for the poor people. Poor people, mind, who sit in the back seats of our church. They must not pay anything. I want all the seats to be free."

The clergyman took the money. "My child," he said solemnly, "it shall be done, with God's help."

When the child was dead he placed her little bank and the pittance it contained on the pulpit, and told the story. Tears were in every eye. One wealthy man after another came forward with his offering. Children came; women also; and the poor with their mites.

A week or two ago the completed church, ready for its poor occupants, was dedicated to the service of that God who willed that the widow's mite and the poor little child's offering should not fail of their errand.

A somewhat similar case occurred in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A poor woman, dying in an infirmary under the charge of the good Dr. Passavant, in Pittsburg, gave him a gold dollar.

"I have always tried to give something to those poorer than myself," she said. "When I am dead give this in charity, and if possible in Milwaukee, my old home."

A year passed and Dr. Passavant still kept the coin, when he was called to Milwaukee to establish an infirmary similar to his own. The story of the dollar was told and awakened sympathy. Subscriptions poured in, and the subscribers with one voice agreed that the great building should bear the name of the poor widow.

Surely no good word is spoken in vain. We may not, as in these cases, be able to have the echoes wide-spread, but God hears them.—*Youth's Companion.*

THE THISTLE AND THE ROPE-WALK.

"Such a mite as I can do no good," is the general impression of our boys and girls, when they are urged to do what they can for the good work. But smaller, humbler instruments than you God has made use of to do great works in this world.

A great army, many years ago, invaded Scotland. They crept on stealthily over the border, and prepared to make a night attack on the Scottish forces. There lay the camp, all silently in the starlight, never dreaming that danger was so near. The Danes, to make their advance more noiseless, came forward barefooted. But as they neared the sleeping Scots, one unlucky Dane brought his broad foot down squarely on a bristling thistle. A roar of pain was the consequence, which rang like a trumpet-blast through the sleeping camp. In a moment each soldier had grasped his weapon, and the Danes were thoroughly routed. The thistle was from that time adopted as the national emblem of Scotland.

By the harbour of New London there was once a long, old rope-walk, with a row of square window-holes fronting the water. In time of war, a British admiral was cruising off that coast, and had a very good chance to enter and destroy the town. He was once asked afterward why he did not do it. He replied that he should have done so "if it hadn't been for that formidable long fort, whose guns commanded the harbor." He had been scared off by the poor old rope-walk.

God has his uses for even the simplest and humblest of us. Our great business should be to find out what the Lord would have us to do, and then do it with all our might, mind and strength.—*Exchange.*

CHRIST ONLY.—A Spanish painter was once employed to paint the "Last Supper." It was his object to get all the sublimity of his art into the figure and countenance of the Lord Jesus; but he put on the table in the foreground some chased cups, the workmanship of which was exceedingly beautiful. When his friends came to see the picture on the easel, one said:

"What beautiful cups!"

"Ah," said he, "I have made a mistake; these cups direct the eyes of the spectator from the Lord, to whom I wish to direct the attention of the observer."

He took up his brush and blotted them from the canvas, that the strength and vigor of the chief object might be prominently seen and observed. Whatsoever hinders us from beholding Christ in his glory should be removed.—*Selected.*

RANDOM READINGS.

Never let a day pass without doing something for Jesus.

Stay not till you are told of opportunities to do good—inquire after them.

He who buys what he does not want will soon want what he cannot buy.

Conviction, were it ever so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into conduct.—*Carlyle.*

These are the best Christians who are more careful to reform themselves than to consure others.—*Fuller.*

It is from our hearts and not from an outward source, that we draw the lines which color the web of our existence.

I serve is nobler than *I rule,*
Tho' men may not believe it;
And they stand first in Jesus's school
Who lovingly receive it.—*N.*

It is vain to think we can take any delight in being with Christ hereafter if we care not how little we are in His company here.

A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.—*John Milton.*

There are some vices which adhere to us only because of others; and which, when the trunk is removed, fall away like branches.—*Pascal.*

The nearer the soul is to God, the less its perturbations; as the point nearest the center of a circle is subject to the least motion.

Beautiful lives have grown up from the darkest places, as pure, white lilies, full of fragrance, have blossoms on slimy, stagnant waters.

That man who is in the highest state of prosperity and who thinks his fortune most secure knows not if it will remain so till the evening.—*Demosthenes.*

Every Christian has peculiar infirmities; these are not to be nursed, but to be taken to the great Physician for healing: he that nurseth infirmity shall be infirm enough.

All the good things of this world are no farther good to us than they are of use; and whatever we may heap up to give others, we enjoy only as much as we can use, and no more.

Whenever Christians countenance any thing which the word of God condemns, they place a stumbling rock in the way of others, which will hinder them from coming to Jesus for salvation.

Do little things as if they were great, because of the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, who dwells in thee; and do great things as if they were little and easy, because of his omnipotence.—*Pascal.*

The creation of saints out of sinners is the demonstration whereby the divinity of the gospel is most shortly and convincingly displayed. Of all the Christian evidences it alone proves that our religion does save from sin.—*Arthur.*

God's truth comes into the soul, somehow as the sunbeams do into the heart of a growing plant and becomes there the secret of the new and constantly unfolding life. And the beauty of that life is just that Truth coming forth into action again!

The late Dr. Bethune asked a morose and miserly man how he was getting along. The man replied, "What is that your business?" Said the doctor, "Oh, sir, I am one of those who take an interest even in the meanest of God's creatures."

A man takes correction and advice much more easily than people think, only he will not bear it when violently given, even though it be well founded. Flowers remain open to the soft-falling dew, but shut up during the violent downpour of rain.

It is not true that the world is smooth. Therefore do not teach your boys that they will find it so. It you do, they will have to learn the contrary by bitter experience. Tell them frankly that the pathway of life to active men, to such as faithfully serve themselves and their kind, is rough, and rugged and thorny. Then they will not be disappointed. But inculcate with this correct information lessons of physical and moral courage. Instruct them that he who shrinks from the encounter is a coward, while he who bravely does his duty, under all circumstances, in spite of opposition—sometimes, it may be, in the face of denunciation and obloquy—is a true hero. He has a sufficient reward and of that he is always certain, in the mere consciousness of doing right. This will always buoy him up and support him in his darkest hours.