

## CHRISTMAS OUTCASTS.

Christ died for all and on the hearts of all  
Who gladly decorate their cheerful homes  
At Christmas tide, this blessed truth shall fall  
That they may mix some honey with the gall  
Of those to whom no Christmas ever comes.

The poor are everywhere in nature's course,  
Yet they may still control some sweetened crumbs;  
No matter what they lack in hearts or purse;  
But there are those whose bitter fate is worse,  
To whom no day of Christmas ever comes.

The man who wildly throws away his chance  
An outcast from all cheerful hearts and homes,  
Who may not mingle with the happy dance,  
Nor gain from loving eyes one kindly glance,  
Is he to whom no Christmas ever comes.

The man condemned in hidden ways to grope,  
At sight of whom each kindly voice is dumb,  
Or whose life is shortened in its scope,  
Who waits for nothing but the hangman's rope,  
Is he to whom a Christmas cannot come.

Christ died for all: He came to find the lost,  
Whether they hide in palaces or slums,  
No matter how their lines of life are crossed,  
And they who love Him best will serve Him most  
By helping those to whom no Christmas comes.

## WHAT CHRISTMAS BROUGHT TO TIM.

BY MYRA.

It was near the close of a bitter day in December. The cold wind crept into every nook and cranny, blew around the corners, rattled the window panes, whisked under the casement and through the cracks of the doors.

Tim had the rheumatism; and the whistle down the chimney made him shiver as he moved the geranium from the window. He stopped a moment to look out. It was the night before Christmas; you would have known it by the rush and the whirl and the mysterious parcels, large and small. Everybody looked happy—at least Tim thought so; and for awhile there seemed a reflection of it in his own face. Once, he smiled, and a wistful, far-away look came, as a stout, rosy-cheeked little girl danced along. "My little gal," he said, softly, and turned away, tears rolling down his cheeks, as his eye rested on the small willow chair in the corner, with a doll in it.

What a Christmas for him, he thought—no one to love—no one to love him; and tears came faster and faster. No wonder; the room did look cheerless—as a room always will without a woman's care, though the occupant be a bit artistic in the arrangement of his plain furniture, and the two or three ornaments about. You will imagine Tim had not always lived alone. A comely wife, and a sweet little girl, called Blossom, had made life—O so happy for him, until a dreadful fever came, and in one short week both of these treasures were taken from him.

And now all the sunshine had gone from life; and the ache that came into Tim's heart then had never died away. Friends came to weep with him; the minister offered his sympathy and consolations; but from them all he turned away, saying only, "God has been cruel to me."

That he might free himself from old associations, he sold his little home, and went to a large town, miles away—rented the room in which we find him, worked every day, and wrapped himself about in his own sorrows. From a strong man, cheery, with a ready helping hand for any in need, he had come to be morose; and so gloomy, that the few who met him rather avoided speaking. A stoop was in his shoulders; his hair was turning grey; and he looked older by ten years than he really was. The Bible, once read daily with his wife, was rarely opened.

And now Christmas was coming for the fifth time to him alone—no word of good cheer given to him; none had he given to others. The lodgers in the house and come and gone, few giving a thought to the lonely man.

A few weeks before this, a family had taken the rooms opposite his. For the first time since Tim had taken up his abode there, children's voices were heard. He tried to shut the sound out, and when, this very day, having left his door ajar, a little face peeped in, and spying the doll, called out, "Daddy! daddy!" he only said, "go away, child." But as he shut the door the little mother, who had come for her baby, bowed and said, "excuse him, sir; he did not know any better."

"Pretty little dear," Tim heard her say, as she kissed the child; and his heart must have been a little softened, for he muttered to himself, "I don't want any baby but my little gal. Nobody cares for me."

Poor man! how could he know that the same little woman had felt so sorry for him—had been trying for days to

find some way to do him a kindness. Yes, his heart was softened, or he would not have smiled out of the window at the little girl. And long years had passed since he had wept—now he buried his face in his hands, and wept convulsively. Somehow, blowing his nose had made the tears come faster; but he did not notice for a long time, that as he drew his handkerchief from his pocket two leaflets had fallen. When, at length, he saw them, he picked them up and read on one, "God never forgets;" on the other, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." In the fading light Tim read them all through. Some one must have tucked them in his pocket as he came from his work yesterday, as he had not been out to-day. Many a time this had been done before; but they had always been thrown away.

"It may be all true; but I can't—no, I can't," he said, half aloud; and leaped his weary head against the chair. Soon he fell into a state between waking and sleeping, during which the images of his fancy had a dreamy reality; yet the thread of his thoughts was not broken. Away back he went to the days of his childhood. The little cot on the mountain side was before him; he could hear the rippling of the brook, and the singing of the birds; again he kneeled with his father and mother for the evening prayers; over again he lived the years of boyhood; recalled the day Rosa became his wife; that other day when little Blossom, open her blue eyes; the years of happiness with these treasures. Had not God been good to him? Had He ever forgotten? And then Tim must have fallen asleep, for merrily rang out the midnight chimes, "Glory to God in the Highest," as he opened his eyes. "Father in Heaven, forgive," was all he could say, as the remembrance of his years of selfish ingratitude came over him.

When Tim waked in the morning, it seemed to him that the angels had been singing to him all night. He knew his own little girl had been to him—had kissed him, and sat in her own little chair, and said, "Father, be good to the children, for the Lord was once a little child;" "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." It could not have been a dream, he thought; and yet there was the chair, just as he left it the night before. He heard a noise at the door, and dressing quickly, he opened it and found a little parcel on the knob outside; and two curly heads could be seen peeping out of the opposite door, and sweet voices called out, "Merry Christmas, sir!" and "Merry Christmas, Tim!" Tim tried to say, but his voice choked him. You'd been pleased to see how the clouds had cleared from his face, and how much of the old look had come back, as he opened the package and found a big apple, a turn-over, and a little candy. "Bless them," said he; and he took down his Bible and read.

I should like to tell you all about it, but I can't now—how the children became acquainted and said "Uncle Tim" that very day—how he was prevailed upon to take Christmas dinner with them—how they all became great friends—how the children often played in his room, and the doll and the chair were always the delight of the little girl, and a tin horse the great wonder of the boy. Yet it was truly so; and by-and-by, when a young woman, whom the children called "aunt," but who was not an aunt at all, and had not a relation in the world, brightened again Tim's fireside, they both remembered the Lord Jesus, and went about doing good—unnoticed—and poor in this world's wealth, but rich in the wealth of loving hearts and sunny smiles.

## THE MIGHTY MONOSYLLABLE.

BY REV. T. L. CUYLER.

The most effective word on many occasions in English language, is the mighty monosyllable No. It has been the pivot on which innumerable destinies have turned for this world and the next. Uttered at the right moment, it has saved multitudes from perdition. For example, the splendid career of Joseph turned on the prompt "no" spoken at the very nick of time. Had he stopped to parley with that wanton woman (as too many young men stop to parley with a temptress on the street), he would have been lost. How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? I saved him from the dizzy cataract. Daniel might plausibly have said to himself "O, everybody about the court drinks wine and lives high on the king's dainties; I do not want to be thought queer or self-righteous." He dared to be singular. At the end of a few weeks he had a cleaner countenance and a sweeter breath than any of the fast livers in the palace. "So will not I" was the motto of the courageous teetotaler. If he had drifted along with the cur-

rent of temptation, we might never have heard of even the name of Daniel.

All the people who make their mark, or ever achieve substantial work for God and the Right, are the people who are not ashamed to be "peculiar" and singular. The man who runs with the crowd, counts for nothing. It is when he turns about and faces the multitude who are bent on evil, that he commands every eye. Then by a firm, courageous protest, he may "put a thousand to flight." So the young monk of Wittenburg turned and faced the angry hosts of the Papacy. Martin Luther standing along was reinforced by the Almighty.

Every young man and woman in their humbler spheres must dare to come out and be separate from sinful fashions if they wish to save their characters and their souls. The downward pull of evil custom is tremendous; to be able to face it with a resolute "no" requires the strength of God in the heart. Unless one has a firm footing he will be carried with the surrounding current. Three-fourths of all the persons who are drowned at the sea-bathing resorts are swept out by the undertow. This is the secret but strong influence which lays hold of so many church-members, and carries them off into extravagant living, into perilous amusements, and all manner of worldly conformities.

Pluck is essential to true manly piety. The messmates of Captain Hedley Vickers (whose biography ought to be in the room of every clerk and every college boy) sneered at him as a "Methodist," and dubbed him a fanatic. God's grace gave him staying power. He placed his Bible on the table in his tent and stood by his colors, saying "that Book shall speak for me." I once met a soldier who served with Vickers in the Crimea, and he told me that the young hero was a spiritual power in his regiment. Admiral Foote wielded the same sort of influence in our American Navy. Even the frivolous and the profane respect a man the mere when he has the courage to face them with a "No!" Earnestly do we urge every young man or woman who would maintain a good conscience, and every follower of Christ who wishes to honor his Master, to keep this mighty monosyllable within reach. "No" is the watchword of true pluck; "Yes" is the cowardly surrender of mere pulp. If the Christian character starts with faith in Christ, it is very imperfect and inefficient until you "add to your faith courage."

## A YOUNG LADY ABANDONS DANCING.

Mr. Campbell observed: "Not long ago I was living with a gentleman, and the young lady of the house asked me about the harm of worldly amusements. After we had discussed that matter for some time, she asked me if there was any great harm in dancing. I asked her if before going to a dance she could kneel and ask God's blessing on what she was about to do. She had not as yet fully come out for Christ, and these pleasures of the world were very dear to her. So I brought her face to face with the Master himself, for I think it right to leave such inquiries to work out the details for themselves. I had given her a system on which to work, and that was all that was needed. The next morning when she came down to breakfast, I saw by her appearance that she had not had much sleep, and when I was about to leave the room she followed me and said: 'Mr. Campbell, I have resolved to give up dancing; I thought I would just like to do so for Jesus.' 'Just a little love-gift for him,' I said. 'Yes, just that,' she replied. She had taken her difficulty right to the Lord, and she had conquered.'

## WHAT ONE WOMAN DID.

Several years ago Miss Beilby, a young English woman who had studied medicine to fit herself for usefulness as a missionary at Lucknow, India, was sent for by the wife of the native Prince of Puna, who was ill. Puna was a long distance from Lucknow, and the journey was a dangerous one; if Miss Beilby went, she would be separated by more than a hundred miles from any white man.

Her friends urged her to refuse. The English woman was young and timid, but she knew her duty; she went, remained two months and cured the patient. When she was about to return, the Ranees sent for her and begged her to go in person to Queen Victoria, with the message that Indian women, not being allowed the attendance of men physicians, died in great numbers every year for want of care. The Ranees brought paper, pen, and ink, and, with tears, besought Miss Beilby to write her petition to the Queen to send to them women doctors. "Write it small, Saheba," she begged, "for I shall put it in a locket and hang it about your neck, and you must

wear it until you put it into the hands of the great Ranees herself."

Miss Beilby returned to England the next year, obtained an interview with Queen Victoria, and placed the locket with the message in her hands. The Queen was deeply touched, and empowered Lady Dufferin, the wife of the Viceroy of India, to form an association for sending out female medical aid to the women of India.

Many women doctors have been sent out by the association, and Indian women are now being educated as physicians and nurses. An estate of fifty acres, with large buildings, has been given by a native prince as a hospital for Hindu female patients.

Had the timid missionary refused to undertake the perilous duty to one woman, these great blessings—which are but the beginning of help and hope for all the women of India—probably never would have come to them.

Sow the seed, however small it be, of good deeds. Only God knows what the fruit will be.—*Youth's Companion.*

## BITTER WORDS.

A single bitter word may disquiet an entire family for a whole day. One surly glance casts a gloom over the household; while a smile, like a gleam of sunshine, may light up the darkest and weariest hours. Like unexpected flowers which spring up along our path, full of freshness, fragrance and beauty, so kind words, gentle acts, and sweet dispositions make glad the sacred spot called home. No matter how humble the abode, if it be sweetened with kindness and smiles, the heart will turn lovingly toward it from all the world; and home, if it be ever so homely, will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sun.—*Sel.*

## NOTHING FINISHED.

I had the curiosity to look into a little girl's work-box. I found a "bead purse" half done. There was no prospect of its being finished, for the needles were out, and the silk on the spools tangled into a wisp. I took up a nice piece of perforated paper, on which was wrought one lid of a Bible, and beneath it the words, "I love"; but what she loved was left for me to conjecture. Beneath the Bible lid I found a sock for some baby foot; but it had come to a stand just on the heel, and there it seemed doomed to remain. Near the sock was a needle book, one cover of which was neatly made, and on the other, partly finished, was marked, "To my dear."

During my travels through that work-box I found not a single article complete. Mute as they were, these half-finished, forsaken things told me a sad story about that little girl. They told me that with a heart full of generous affection, with a head full of useful and pretty projects, all of which she had both the means and the skill to carry into effect, she was always doing, but never accomplishing her work. It was a want of perseverance.

My little friends, it matters little what great things we undertake. Our glory is in what we accomplish. Nobody cares for what we mean to do; but everybody will open their eyes, by-and-by, to see what men and women and little children have done.

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

Charles Kingsley has said, 'If a tree is not growing, it is sure in the long run to be dying.' And so are our souls. If they are not growing, they are dying; if they are not getting better, they are getting worse. This is why the Bible compares our souls to trees, not out of a mere pretty fancy of poetry, but for a great deep, world-wide lesson, that every tree in the field may be a pattern, a warning to us thoughtless men, that as that tree is meant to grow, so our souls are meant to grow. As that tree dies unless it grows so the soul's spiritual life must die unless it grows.

The importance of having a vigorous spiritual life, of having it abundantly, was ably enforced in one of our city pulpits on a late Sabbath. It being generally admitted there is a spiritual life, and that it is capable of growth, a moment's reflection upon what spiritual life is, and to what perils it is exposed, the need of its being kept in a healthy, vigorous tone is obvious. As the delicate, feeble, physical frame is especially exposed to disease, so the feebly, sickly spiritual life is in special danger of being overcome by the temptations of the world. Exposure to disease that the vigorous constitution will meet unharmed, will successfully assail the weak. Temptations to evils that those with abundant spiritual life resist without injury, seriously imperil the feeble in spiritual attainments. The times are presenting many conspicuous examples of those who, professing a spiritual life, have it so feebly developed, so little of a healthy, vigorous tone that it is overcome by the deceitfulness of riches, the pride of life, and lust of other things. In the exigencies of life it is found wanting, and Christ is betrayed in the house of His friends. To insure efficiency in spiritual life in these days, it must be vigorous and abundant.

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