

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Balmoral Mission Station,
South Africa,
Sept. 27, 1923

Dear Children:

One of the most pleasant memories of my childhood is the Christmas stocking. I generally borrowed a bigger one than my own and hung it up in the orthodox way, near the chimney. In the early morning I was generally awake and would run to bring that wonderful stocking, always bulging with good things.

Since then I have learned that our very best Santa Claus is God. 'Every good and every perfect gift cometh from Him.'

You remember the story of the shepherds watching their flocks on the first Christmas eve. How they rejoiced to hear the "glad tidings of great joy."

Notice the first Jewish king, when God gave him a Christmas stocking filled with good things. He could not see what was inside, so the prophet told him that he would find, first of all a "new heart." Next something good to eat, "three loaves of bread." Next, the Spirit of God would come upon him, and he should be turned into another man, able to help the oppressed.

When I, as a child, sat in bed pulling out good things from that big stocking, I very soon reached the toe part, and there was the finish. No more Christmas stocking for a whole, long year. But not so with this one given Saul. For altogether so much came out the first day, yet it was still filled with good things, for God is with thee."

This points us back again to the first Christmas and the word "Emanuel," meaning, "God with us." For together with Emanuel, God also freely gives us "all things." Notice Jesus asking the disciples, "Lacked ye anything?" Then when the 5000 hungry people were fed, we find the Emanuel being present meant the supply of every need. Without Jesus, the little boy would have had only enough for himself. But with Santa Claus, Himself there, the more the lad pulled out of his stocking the more there was to pull out.

This teaches us another rule of the Christmas stocking: the good things we have received are not for ourselves alone, but we are to pass them on. The shepherds were told by the heavenly Messenger the "glad tidings of great joy" is for all.

One thinks of the "rich young ruler," who was unwilling to distribute of his good things. He went away sorrowful; missed his chance of becoming a disciple of Jesus and of having treasure in heaven.

At the burning bush Moses almost made the same mistake. He seemed very reluctant to accept his Christmas stocking. Think of the wonderful things he pulled out of it. A frightful snake, a leprous hand, the ten plagues of Egypt. And this reminds us of another law of this miraculous stocking: "all things" that come from it are good things to them that love God. The plagues that afflicted the Egyptians worked together for good to the Jews. Moses found many difficulties but the marvellous Christmas power changed them all into blessing. There was the

Red Sea where Emanuel gave a great deliverance making 'the wrath of man to praise' Him.

There was the cry for water, but "Lo, I am with you," was all sufficient. Abundant, more than sufficient, water gushed from the Rock. The "Rock was Christ." There could be no lack when Santa Claus was present. Every morning was Christmas with stockings bulging with manna, and always baskets full left over.

It was well for Moses that he did not refuse his Christmas stocking like the rich young ruler. Not only was Moses a wonderful blessing to the Jews but to us also. In heaven is sung the song of Moses and the Lamb, for 'the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.'

This leads us to another law of this Christmas giving. The more one gives the more the giver is blessed. Moses has the honour of appearing on the Mount of Transfiguration as the only available type of the resurrected saints, while in heaven, no mere man receives equal honour.

As bearers of the glad tidings of great joy, we feel the joy of all the good things we pass on. The rivers of blessing and joy flow first through our own souls, giving us peace that passeth understanding and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Only as we are blessed can we be used to bless others.

And now let us go back and see our first example, Saul. We find him doing a very foolish thing, casting away his Christmas stocking with all the good things. It seems he failed to learn the first law of the stocking, obedience. Nothing can take the place of obedience, not even sacrifice, and hard work. To keep this stocking of good things, one must always do exactly what God says. But the time came when the Lord departed from Saul, and he then had only his original black stocking filled with things that distressed him and made him very unhappy.

Even this got nearer and nearer empty until only the things in the toe remained. He could not see through, so he went to the spiritualists to find a medium, that could tell him what things he would pull out on the morrow. He probably heard what he expected as he found out, by this time, that the "way of the transgressor is hard" and that they mostly find "sour grapes" in their stocking, and often a rod of correction. For "there is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked," and again, "your sins have withholden good things from you."

"How foolish," you say, "for Saul to cast away his white Christmas stocking with all the good things." You are right, God says so too. "Thou fool," is His word to all such. And so, to help us to choose aright, he makes the way so plain that even children can understand and receive. On top they always find, like Saul, a new heart; next, good things to eat. Every day God's word, the heavenly manna, will be sweeter to you "than honey in the honey comb." Then the third good things is the Spirit of God coming upon, ("whom the world cannot receive") the renewed nature. The Spirit of God" enabled Saul to fight the battles of the Lord and bring help

and blessing to others. It was Jesus who said, 'How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.' Another says 'to them that obey Him.'

Let me ask, how many of you possess this beautiful Christmas stocking? Are you walking in obedience so that each day you pull out 'good things?' Remember that the good things continually grow better and better: this by the way is another important Christmas law.

Then let me repeat that, although you can not see through the stocking, you may be perfectly sure that it holds no bad things, but only good things. What at first may appear bad because of the wrapping (like the Red Sea to Moses) generally contains the very best things of all.

Would you not like your life to count for God? Then you must receive this gift. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the (good) things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But each day brings its glad surprise of 'good things.'

And now my last word, a word to the unsaved: I ask in behalf of God who loved and gave the first Christmas gift, Emanuel; and for the sake of Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood—I beseech with tears of fellowship with Him who wept over Jerusalem, that you accept Christ just now, as your Saviour and Lord.

Yours in Him,

H. C. SANDERS

TO MRS. JOSEPH BULLOCK AND
MR. JOHN H. BULLOCK.

We, the "Alliance of the Reformed Baptist Church of Canada," hereby wish to express our gratitude to you for your kindness and benevolence to us, as a people, and your fellowship and devotion to the cause of holiness, and its propagation, in preserving and beautifying the Tabernacle at 'Beulah Camp Ground,' and also in beautifying and making the Camp Ground more convenient for those who attend the services, not only by your generous contributions and labours of a single year, but your continued interest manifested over a period of many years, for we know you have stood with us when it cost you more than money and personal labour to do so.

We cannot here enumerate the acts of your kindness, but they are fresh in our memory. Please accept this expression of our appreciation of them all; also our prayers that all may be amply rewarded by Him in whose vineyard we labour.

Committee:

H. C. ARCHER,

S. H. CLARK,

S. A. BAKER.

"It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense." Ah, don't you suppose if we knew all about things we'd feel as relieved at not having resented an injury as if we had held our hands from striking a blind man who had run against us?

Did you ever know a Christian to dance that he was not soon missed from the prayer meeting?