

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS GIFT

Again we have entered upon the season, which is dear to every child of God. Our minds invariably go back to Bethlehem's manger, and of the circumstances leading up to that day of all days. The Messiah had been promised—and how sorely needed. The Prophets foretold His coming, and for over four hundred years the people waited and longed for His appearance. When the time was fully ripe, a heavenly messenger was sent to earth to make known His name and the motive of His coming. "His name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save the people from their sins." In the fulness of time He came, not as a great king in pomp and pride, but as a lowly Babe, the smallest and most innocent creature on earth. The story never grows old. Joseph and Mary travelling towards Jerusalem to pay their yearly taxes. The streets and inns were crowded, so those lowly ones were forced to take inferior lodgings, even a stable was welcome to that tired young wife so near the crucial time of her life—but that stable became a hallowed place that night, for was it not the birth-place of the King of Kings?

The shepherds watching their flocks by night were honored by an angel of the Lord and "the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid," but the angel quieted their fears, for said he, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Immediately there was wafted on the midnight breeze, music of inexpressible sweetness. Methinks that angel choir were playing on their harps of gold as they joyously and triumphantly sang that never-to-be-forgotten song of praise, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

We can imagine with what wonder and amazement those shepherds gazed upon that heavenly host, and how they listened until the last sweet strains died away, and then they seemed to forget all about their flocks in their haste to see that which had come to pass. They found the Babe lying in a manger, and when they had seen for themselves, they believed, "and made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child." There came wise men of noble bearing from the far East, seeking a king—they had been led by a wondrous star which at last stood over where the young child was, and when they went into the house, they found the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him as the King whom they sought. They presented unto Him precious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. This instituted the Christmas giving—for ages the birthday of our Saviour has been celebrated by exchanging gifts during the Christmas season. Many have lost sight of the real spirit of Christmas because of this, instead of worshipping Jesus, the greatest gift ever made to this old world. He fulfilled His mission on earth, and is now sitting at the right hand of God making intercession for us. Shall we not give Him our best love and serve Him as never before, with true hearts, fervently, this glad Christmastide? If so, the coming days will prove victorious to all of us.

I. M. K.

DONATION

On Tuesday evening, Dec. 3rd, about 70 of the friends of Port Maitland and Sandford gathered at the parsonage at Port Maitland to spend the evening with us. They seemed to come with hearts and hands full. The various articles of groceries, pickles, preserves, butter, eggs, etc., that we found in the kitchen and pantry bore evidence to the love and kindness of their hearts. It is just like these people to express themselves in such a manner. During the past four years that we have labored with them, quite often they have visited us in like manner. Part of the evening was spent in singing, refreshments were served. Afterwards Mr. Sears presented us with a sum of money—thirty-one and a half dollars (\$31.50) from these friends. The other articles of groceries, etc., amounted to about twenty-five dollars. After trying to thank these friends we had prayer. We pray that God will bless them with all spiritual blessings and help us to minister unto them in spiritual things.

MR. AND MRS. HARTLEY E. MULLEN

PRAISE, THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER
UNTO OUR GOD

We praise Thee O God because Thou art the Great Omnipotent, Allwise, Almighty and only True God, and beside Thee there is no other. We praise Thee for Thou art worthy, and because you have given unto us the spirit of praise.

Thou hast created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is. By Thee was all things made and without Thee was not anything made that is made; and for Thy pleasure were they created.

You created man in Thine own image and redeemed him after the fall, washed us from our sins in Thine own precious blood and made us priests and kings unto God.

Thou art of great compassion and of wondrous love. Thy mercy endureth forever.

Thy name O Lord is exalted above the heavens. Thou art higher than the high. Thou art greater than the great, stronger than the strong, wiser than the wise, purer than the pure and fairer than the fair.

Thou art greatly to be praised. Yea, Thou art greatly to be desired. Thou art altogether lovely, the lily of the valley, the bright and morning star, and the chiefest among ten thousand to our soul.

I thank Thee, O God, because I have no reasons to feel unthankful, and because I feel truly thankful in my heart and soul; having much to thank Thee for O God. I was dead but in Jesus Christ I have been made alive.

I was lost but Jesus found me; sick and wounded and he healed me. I was hungry and He gave me the bread of life. I was thirsty and He gave me to drink of the waters of life, of which if a man drink, he shall never thirst.

I was blind but now thank God I see. I was poor and He made me rich; naked, and he clothed me.

I was without God and without hope. Now I have a hope of eternal glory through Jesus Christ, my Lord.

We thank Thee, O God, that although Thou art so high and holy; Thou didst condescend to men of low estate, and art not ashamed to call them brethren.

Therefore, we humbly pray and entreat that you will grant unto us great grace, that

we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, may serve Thee without fear in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life. That Thy kingdom may increase until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the deep; until all the hosts of earth will fall on their faces before God and join the hosts of heaven saying, "Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power and Might be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

—C. W., Wood Island, N. B.

THE MOST PRECIOUS GIFT!

The Christmas season is almost upon us again. Many minds will be turned to Bethlehem and God's great gift to the children of men. When we think of the wonderful plan of God for the redemption of a sinful world we feel lost in amazement at such wonderful love. But the masses fail to catch the vision. Making gifts to our friends will be the occupation of most of us. And even that has become very much of a trading policy. You give to me and I will give to you.

We would like to see thousands at this Christmas season awaken to a sense of their duty to God. Only by a spiritual awakening can men and women realize this. The poet caught the vision when he exclaimed:

"Were the whole realm of Nature mine
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

Paul says the churches of Macedonia were so liberal they first of all gave themselves. What a whole-hearted gift! Brethren, that would be a fine way to celebrate Christmas this year. Examine our consecration and make a living sacrifice of ourselves to the Lord. It would send a spiritual thrill through the church. The outside world would take note and many would follow suit. This would be a good time for our precious boys and girls to make a covenant with God and give to Him the most precious gift they could in laying their lives on the altar of service. And when we have done that we are still a thousand fold in His debt, "For although He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich."

But someone may ask, "How can I serve Him?" As we minister to those about us we are doing it unto Him. Oh, how blessed life becomes when we do all things for Him and for His glory. Others may not appreciate our efforts but He sees every cup of cold water given in His name, and says it shall not lose its reward. Life, love and service given for the Master is gold laid up in the treasure vaults of the skies.—The Can. F. M. Herald.

Someone apologized to a bright little woman for an occurrence at which she might have taken offense, whereupon she laughingly disclaimed any such thought. "I am honest, you know, so I never pick up things that don't belong to me—not even slights. I don't like them anyway, and I have to be quite certain that one is intended for my use before I appropriate it." Many people spend weary hours in nursing grievances which they have only "picked up," and in brooding over slights which were never designed for them. Hence, "honesty" of the kind specified by the little woman in question is heartily to be commended.—Sel.