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owhood, to dwell amongst her children—till health and strength left her. God forbid that conscience should accuse any of you of ingratitude or murmuring on account of the care she has been to you of late. When you go back to your homes, be careful of your example before your own children; for the fruit of your own doing you will surely reap from them when you yourself totter on the brink of the grave. I entreat you, as a friend, as one who has himself entered the evening of life, that you may never say in the presence of your families or before heaven, 'Our mother has outlived her usefulness; she was a burden to us.' Never, never! a mother can never live as long as that! No; when she can no longer labor for her children, nor yet care for herself, she can fall like a precious weight upon their bosoms, and call forth, by her helplessness, all the noble, generous feelings of their hearts.

"Adieu, then, poor toil-worn mother; there are no more days of pain for thee. Undying vigor and everlasting usefulness are thine inheritance."

But for many brave, confirmatory facts laid before us at our National Council meeting, in Ottawa, and also from my own personal knowledge of an almost parallel case in one of the charitable institutions of the city in which I live, I should have hesitated to pass on the sad little incident related above to the readers of our "Home Magazine," believing and hoping that it must be of a very exceptional nature. I do so, however, trusting that, should it find its way into the hands of some now prosperous son or daughter, who has either carelessly or wilfully forgotten the loving ministry of the mother of their childhood's days, and has thought or said, "Our mother has outlived her usefulness," conscience may be awakened, and the lesson learnt that, "As we sow, so, also, shall we reap." H. A. B.

The Quiet Hour.

Acceptable Giving.

"I asked for alms!
He flung a coin at me
Contemptuously.
Not without sense of shame
I stooped and picked it up.
Does this fulfil
The Master's will
To give a cup
Of water in His Name?"

"I asked for bread!
He handed out to me
Indifferently
A ticket for some food.
It answered to my need.
Was this the way
On that great day
Christ stopped to feed
The hungry multitude?"

"When we shall wait,
After this mortal strife,
And to His presence go
As supplicants indeed,
Will it be thus
He will on us
In our great need
His priceless gift bestow?"

Many people seem to think that anything will do to give to God, and that no care is necessary in presenting their offerings. If they are preparing a Christmas gift for a friend, they are careful to choose something that will give pleasure, and to wrap it up in dainty fashion with a few words of love to enhance its value. Why should we be less thoughtful and courteous in presenting our gifts to our Father?

The Bible is full of warnings against the common idea that God will certainly accept everything that is professedly offered to Him. I say "professedly," because much of the money which professes to be a gift to God is really offered on the altar of self-love, or used to silence the accusing voice of an offended conscience.

"It matters little what I drop
Into the blessing plate;
'Tis God's acceptance that doth make
The smallest offering great."
And yet does it not sometimes happen

that the size of the coin dropped into the plate depends to some extent on the person sitting beside the giver? When a subscription list is carried round, many of the sums marked on it are very much larger than they would have been if only God—"ONLY GOD!"—knew the names of the donors! When you rummage your closets for things to put into a missionary box, or to give to a poor neighbor, don't you sometimes seek for things that you will be glad to get out of the way, rather than for suitable gifts which you really think will be acceptable to the recipient?

If only we always remembered that God is looking out hopefully for our gifts, we might lay at His feet some, at least, that are really consecrated. No one is too poor to give Him a gift that is pure gold. The poor widow who cast her last farthing into the treasury, thinking that only God would know about her great sacrifice, filled the heart of the King with wonderful gladness. That farthing was not copper, but pure gold, through and through. And I don't think it was so valuable because it was her last coin, but because it was the gift of love. The tiniest child can walk in her footsteps. No one is too poor or too rich to offer an acceptable gift to God. A millionaire has no advantage over the poorest laborer, as far as the value of his offerings in God's sight is concerned. We must get rid of the idea that God is poor enough to need our money, and that His work can't be accomplished without the help of man. He holds all the riches of the universe in His hand and can make men rich or poor according to His will. He does not need our gifts, but we need to give, and are urged to give gladly for our own sakes. God wants to make us rich, but loves us too well to let our souls' growth be stopped by earthly lists. Let us be always on guard against that insidious foe—the love of money—which is like a deadly weed creeping quietly over the garden of the soul and smothering the natural instincts of brotherly love before they have blossomed out into kindly actions. God's deep, wise love sometimes forces Him to deprive a man of the gold he has worked hard to win. Let the man himself be truly loved and loved in a way that will not hurt his sense of honor. Let us be true to the love of God in the best way we can. Let us be true to the love of our neighbor in the best way we can. Let us be true to the love of our Father in the best way we can.

A real "gift" can never be offered in the hope of a return. We must try to consecrate our offerings, not sell them for the applause of men, or even in the hope of winning a reward from God. Consecration is a difficult and glorious duty. The lower motives, which we hate, are continually trying to gain the dominion over our actions. How disappointed God must be when we lay a gift on His altar and He finds it impossible to accept it because it contains no love, because it is inspired only by a desire to win something for ourselves. And how pleased He is when even a cup of cold water is held out, clear and sparkling with purity of intention—a true gift of love. Every day we have the opportunity of thus gladdening the heart of our Father by little deeds of kindness and golden words of love. Let us form the habit of catching these opportunities on the wing.

But "giving," like other things, is a sacramental thing, having its outward and visible side, as well as the side which is known only to God and the giver himself. The inward and spiritual part of it is the first and vital consideration, but the outward part must not be left entirely to look after itself. This is a practical age, as we are often told, and "charity" is not now a baphazard thing, but is—or should be—scientific and up-to-date in its methods. In the November Number of "Charities and the Commons" there is an article on "Christmas Basket Giving," written by the manager of St. Louis Provident Association. He says that during the last three years about twenty-two thousand dollars has been raised and expended in that city for "Christmas giving." That sounds well, but he goes on to express his opinion that "this Christmas giving is more for the benefit and self-satisfaction of the donors than the recipients, for the Christmas spirit calls for a personal interest between giver and taker. The transient sensations felt by donor and donee are of little lasting benefit to either." He seems to think that many families who are usually self-respecting are degraded and pauperized by this indiscriminate giving, not to speak of the fact that many people who subscribe to this annual Christmas distribution seem to think they have settled their claims for the whole year. It is not scientific, and it is not really kind to overwhelm a poor family with Christmas good cheer and leave it