

Christmas Exchanges and Christmas Gifts.

"A FAIR exchange is no robbery" is a maxim which is very seldom disputed, but let us be careful that we do not call these "fair exchanges" "Christmas gifts," lest we be found guilty of robbing God. Not that it is robbing God to exchange presents with our friends, even at Christmas time (without we give them that which belongs to God). If we call them "Christmas gifts"—gifts commemorative or typical of God's great Christmas gift to us—they should be expensive, should cost us a great deal, and should be given to the poor and needy, hoping nothing in return; otherwise we may rob God of the true meaning of the "Christmas gift."

Jesus gave His most costly gift to the poor and for the needy. Our exchanging of Christmas gifts will be far from satisfactory if we do not remember Him "who gave himself for us." He does not need our gifts, but He allows us to show our gratitude by accepting our presents to His needy ones as gifts to himself. "I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. . . . Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxvi. 35-40.) What has been His gift to us? What shall we give and to whom shall we give it?

Jesus brake and gave the loaves and fishes to His disciples that they might give to the fainting multitude. Doubtless the disciples and their special friends could have looked upon the supply as scant enough for themselves. How disappointed Jesus would have been. They could not have endured the hungry look of the perishing multitude and the disappointed reproving look of their Lord, who "had compassion on the multitude." They obeyed and gave to the multitude. Did they suffer loss? No, theirs was a double feast. How they must have enjoyed supplying the need of those famished brethren, under the smile of their loving Lord. Ours is the privilege of breaking the bread of life to the heathen and thus establishing a universal feast.

Jesus will be present at His birthday feast, December 25th, 1895. We sincerely hope that no one in our Christian land will want for Christmas cheer. But we fear that the "Lord of all earth" will weep over those who have not even heard that "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given": "The Prince of Peace."

A Liberal Offer.

The following is copied from "The Missionary Outlook":

THE object of the publisher of *Outlook* is not to make money. If it were, the price would be advanced forthwith. The object is to spread information, increase interest, and awaken enthusiasm throughout the Church on missionary lines. What we want is a large circulation—to get the paper into every Methodist family, if possible. To hasten this desirable result we offer the *Outlook* from November, 1895, till the end of 1896 (fourteen months in all), for the regular club rate—TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. This is almost giving the paper away. Furthermore, we will also send a free copy for one year to any person sending us a club of eight NEW subscribers. These offers are open only until end of December. Will all our readers who are interested in Methodist missions kindly help in this matter.

Cycle of Prayer.

THE General Missionary Society, the Woman's Missionary Society and the Department of Epworth Leagues and Sunday Schools are arranging a sixteen-page leaflet, "Cycle of Prayer for Missions," containing subjects for prayer, embracing all covered by the Watch Cry of the Students' Volunteer Movement, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation." It is expected the leaflet will be ready before Christmas, and the price will not exceed five cents per copy. While suitable for all ages, a gift of one of these leaflets will afford a good opportunity for Sunday School teachers, Mission Band and Missionary Department leaders to foster an intelligent interest on the subject of missions among our young people.

Missionary Volunteers of Toronto Conference.

AT the last session of the Toronto Conference of the Methodist Church, twenty young men were received on probation for the ministry. Each of these asserted at his respective District Meeting that he believed that he was called of God to preach the Gospel. But owing to the fact that the number of men exceeded the number of circuits, six were placed on the list of reserve.

In the same Conference there are about a dozen ministers and probationers who have signed a declaration asserting their desire to become foreign missionaries, four of whom are ordained ministers in full connection.

Missionaries in heathen lands are saying to us, "Brethren, come to our help," and dying millions are crying, "Come and save us before we perish." Indeed, the whole world is ready for Christ's ambassadors. We believe that the same God who said to the twenty probationers, "Go, preach," and to the volunteers, "Witness in the uttermost parts of the earth," is calling upon the Methodist Church of Toronto Conference to make provision for the sending of these missionary volunteers to the foreign field. The Head of the Church does not animate young men with His spirit, zeal and love to mock them; but the extravagance of a selfish Church frustrates His purpose.

Fully assured that the Holy Ghost, who said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," is saying to the Epworth Leagues and to all Christians in our Church, "Deny yourselves; pray and plan that these young men may be sent to the benighted millions," the volunteers have formed a committee, and have united to work and pray, in order that one at least of their number may be sent to China next summer under the direction of the General Board. In order that this may be accomplished, it will be necessary to collect about \$2,300 to cover the fare, expenses and salary for the first year. That seems a large sum, but we are assured of success, for the Lord has called us and is with us. Every Christian to whose eyes this may come is earnestly requested to pray at least once a day that the necessary funds may be speedily forthcoming; and everyone desiring to assist by way of contribution is directed to write to the Secretary-Treasurer, who will at once acknowledge the amount received and deposit it in the bank.

The volunteers wish it to be distinctly understood that their project is in perfect harmony with the General Missionary Society, and that all contributions to this special fund are to be over and above former givings to the General Fund. For further information, address the Rev. J. D. Fitzpatrick, Secy.-Treas., East Toronto, or Rev. Gilbert Robinson, B.A., Chairman of Committee, Lemonville, Ont.