

FIVE STEPS.

THOMAS R. THOMPSON.

A little sip of cider,
 A little sip of beer;
 A taste that's rather bitter,
 But what is there to fear?
 A glass of foaming lager,
 A choice perfumed cigar,
 It's funny what fanatics
 Those temperance people are.
 Say, boys, here's to our welfare—
 May none here lack a dime
 To buy a glass of liquor
 At any other time.
 Say, can't you trust a fellow?
 Give us a drop of gin
 To stop the dreadful gnawing
 That's going on within.
 Found dead—a common drunkard!
 Alas, how came he there?
 It was the beer and cider:
 BEWARE! BEWARE! BEWARE!!!

—Temperance Banner.

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THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

GOD made man with a natural thirst for knowledge. As God could not be God if there was anything he did not know, so man could not be man if there was anything he did not want to know. One of the strongest proofs that man is the offspring, the child of God, is this inherited desire to know everything. If man were not finite he would know everything. Being finite, however, does not prevent him from desiring to know everything. The world is full of seekers after knowledge, impelled by a constitutional thirst for it.

The study of Jesus will lead man into

the perception that the spiritual underlies all the physical, that the material is only the expression of the ideal, that there is a soul to the universe. But man should seek the higher knowledge—a knowledge of the being, character, and work of Jesus of Nazareth. This will push man into the grandest field of philosophy. The universe had a cause, a beginning. The cause was spiritual; and the universe is not an end, but a means. "It is the material for the realization of thought, the field for the operations of moral and spiritual forces." Man must study these forces and pursue them up to one Great Cause, thus unifying the moral and spiritual universe. — *Missionary Visitor*.

DOING GOD'S ERRANDS.

HESTER was a little girl who was trying to love and serve Jesus. And she showed her love for Jesus by seeking to please him in all she did. She loved to do errands for her mother, and to have her mother say she was a faithful servant when she did them well.

One day she had been talking to her mother about God. As they got through, she looked up with a bright thought beaming in her eyes, and said,—

"Why, mother, then God is sending us on errands all the time. Oh, it is so nice to think that I am God's little errand girl."

"Yes, dear," said her mother; "God has given us all errands to do for him, and plenty of time to do them in, and a book full of directions to show us how to do them. Every day we can tell him what we are trying to do, and ask him to help us. And when he calls us home to himself, we shall have great joy in telling him what we have been trying to do for him."

"I like that," said Hester. "It is very pleasant to be allowed to do errands for God."

"One of my errands," said her mother, "is to take care of you."

"And one of mine, dear mother, is to honour and obey you. I think God gives us very pleasant errands to do."

You know that nothing makes us more happy than to do anything for a person that we really love. That is what Jesus meant when he said "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This is what the apostle John meant when he said that "his commandments are not grievous." His people serve him from love, and that makes everything they do for him light and pleasant to them.—*Children's Friend*.

HAVE courage to be ignorant of evil.



PUT OFF THY SHOES.

THE shoes which you see in the picture are such as we read of in the Bible, and they were not like ours. They were only a flat piece of wood or leather fitted to the sole of the foot, and fastened on with straps or strings. It was very easy to slip them off, and it was the custom in Bible times, and is now in Eastern countries, to put them off as a mark of respect to distinguished persons or in sacred places.

When God talked with Moses at the burning bush he said, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." And he said the same to Joshua afterward when he met and talked with him.

What are we to learn from this? We cannot take off our shoes: it is not the custom where we live. But when we go into any sacred place we must tread softly and behave with great reverence and seriousness.

Children sometimes go into church in a rude and noisy way, and while there laugh and talk and read their papers or library books. This is wrong. The church is God's house. We go there to pray to him, to sing his praise, to listen to his words. God is there. The Bible tells us, "God is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him." Therefore we must be still, and put away all thoughts of work or play or dress, and give close attention to the services. This is like putting our shoes from off our feet. It would be easy for us to do this if we always remembered that the church is a place set apart where we meet our dear heavenly Father.