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THE TWO TUG-BOATS.

ONCE, when stopping at the house of a friend, in the afternoon I noticed his two boys coming in from school. One of them, Charlie, looked bright and pleasant; the other, Georgie, was cross and disagreeable. The father noticed this, and asked Georgie what was the matter.

"Oh, papa," said George, "the teacher called me a blockhead, and told me that I would never be anything in the world. But he praised Charlie, who does not spend half so much time over his studies as I do."

"George," said the father, "he praised Charlie because he always knows his lessons, though he is not brighter than you are, and is younger too. Now let me tell you a story."

So the gentleman told the following:—

"Once, as I was crossing the Delaware River, I saw a large tug-boat steam up to a great ship. They fastened the two by stout ropes; then the tug pulled and pulled, but the ship would not move. For two or three hours they tried, but at last gave up. Then I noticed that another tug came alongside—a smaller one; this they attached to the large ship. The tug gave a puff, and off went the ship down the river, pulled by a little boat not nearly so large as the other."

"Why," said I to a man who stood by, "could not the large tug pull the ship?"

"Oh, sir," said he, "she could not employ all the steam; it escapes by the side pipes. But the small tug uses every particle of her steam; that gives her more strength."

"Now, my dear George, this is just the difference between you and Charlie. Your attention is distracted; many little side things take off your mind from your book. But Charlie put his whole mind on his study. If we desire ever to be of any value in the world, we must fix our whole attention on the thing before us; we should not be busy about half a dozen things at the same time. Neither let us permit our strength to be wasted on trifles, but let us live for some good, great purpose—the glory of God and the benefit of our fellow-men."

CHILDREN AT BETHLEHEM.

Jesus Christ never forgot anything or anybody. Time does not change Him. In all changes He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." What he was, He is, and ever must be.

He was once a little child. He, the true and perfect Son of God, was Son of Man. And He does not forget any part of His life on earth. It is all before Him always.

In this He is not like us. We are always changing. And, as we pass from one state to another, we make room in our little minds for new ideas by letting some of the old thoughts slip. How little of our early days can we recall now! It is, for the most part, a blank. A very few of its saddest and most glad scenes are fixed deep in our hearts: all the rest is gone.

Now look at the truth which our Saviour's perfection makes us sure to hold. We are ready to confess that He, Who is perfect God, is also perfect Man. But how, and how far is He perfect Man? In this way: He, in His heart and most truly, is on this day, perfect Babe, perfect Boy, perfect Youth, perfect Man.

But next fix your thoughts on one of these things. He is perfect Babe. "He is touched with the feeling of" a baby's "infirmities."—Heb. iv. 15. He knows even now what they are, not only with the perfect knowledge of God, but with the perfectly-remembered experience of man.

Think of Jesus on Christmas Day. Think, I mean, of His keeping the Feast. We know that he knows all we do on earth. Of course He knows that His Holy Church throughout the world agrees to keep the feast of His Birth on a special day. Whether that day is really His Birthday or not is not the question now. He knows that His Body the Church keeps a day to celebrate His appearance on earth in the Body prepared by God for Him. He knows it, and He thinks of it. But one step more: He brings back the thought of His baby days when we keep Christmas. No thought is lost on any day, but on Christmas Day a Christmas thought is, if we may say it, the foremost one. The Child Jesus is with us again.

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A LADY'S WISH.—"Oh, how I do wish my skin was as clear and soft as yours," said a lady to her friend. "You can easily make it so," answered the friend. "How?" inquired the first lady. "By using Hop Bitters, that makes pure rich blood and blooming health. It did it for me, as you observe."—*Cairo Bulletin*.