

# Northern Messenger

W. Bronscombe 239 30 09

VOLUME XLIII. No. 40

MONTREAL, OCTOBER 2, 1908.

40 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid

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## Christ Blessing Little Children.

(Edwin Arnold.)



From 'Footsteps of the Master,' published by Thomas Nelson Page & Sons, London.

'JESUS LAID HIS HANDS UPON THEIR HEADS AND BLESSED THEM.'

Well painted, Painter! Yes; thy colors  
stoop,  
As that they show did, to the root of  
things!  
Thy Christ hath eyes whose weary glances  
droop,  
Marred with much love, and all the tears  
it brings;

The ring of faces, brightened from His face,  
Bear earth's mark deepest, and want  
Heaven's help most;  
The children—soft, albeit, their Syrian  
grace—  
Clasp sun-burned breasts and drink of  
milk that cost  
Sweat to provide it. Yet, how the Divine

Breaks through the clay! how Faith's  
gold gilds the story!  
How longing for Heaven's light makes low  
things shine!  
How glorious—at its dimmest—is Love's  
glory!  
We gaze; we are with Him in Palestine.  
Lord Christ! these are 'the little ones' who  
come!  
Thou spakest 'Suffer them'—yea! thou  
dids't say  
'Forbid them not!'—yea! 'mid thy Kingdom,  
some  
Are like to these, thou said'st! Do angels  
lay  
Small, aching heads on sorrow-burdened  
bosoms?  
Do thy young angels work, and starve,  
and weep?  
Is it in Heaven as here that life's first blos-  
soms  
Wither to dust so soon, and will not keep  
Fragrance and joy, save for so brief a space?  
Ah, Christ! those, too were children, with  
the eyes  
Tear-troubled, toil-worn frame, and wasted  
face!  
What comfort hast thou, what supreme  
surprise  
Of hope for us, who have most need of grace?  
Little sweet sister! at his sacred knee,  
Soft peasant-sister! sucking at thy thumb,  
Touched to thy tiny heart with the mystery,  
Glad to be brought, but far too shy to  
come—  
Yes! tremble—but steal closer! let it cover  
All of thy head, that piteous, potent hand!  
And, mothers! reach your round-eyed babies  
over,  
To have their turn—naught though they  
understand!  
For these thereby are safe, being so kissed  
By that Love's lips which kisses out from  
Heaven!  
And we—with 'little children' but no Christ—  
Press in: perchance a blessing may be  
given  
Through them to us, though we the chance  
have missed.

## What Sincerity Is.

Love contains no complete and lasting hap-  
piness save in the transparent atmosphere of  
perfect sincerity. To the point of this sin-  
cerity, love is but an experiment; we live  
in expectation, and our words and kisses are  
only provisional. But sincerity is not possible  
except between lofty and trained consciences.  
Moreover, it is not enough that these con-  
sciences should be such; this is requisite be-  
sides, if sincerity is to become natural and  
essential—that the consciences shall be al-  
most equal, of the same extent, the same  
quality, and that the love that unites them  
shall be deep laid. And thus it is that lives  
of so many men glide away who never meet  
the soul with which they could have been  
sincere.  
But it is impossible to be sincere with  
others before learning to be sincere toward  
one's self. Sincerity is only the consciousness