

the rooms put in thorough order. It was not a very difficult thing to do, for the old gardener had not been long gone, and Bessy enjoyed herself much in setting things right.

Early New Year's morning Bessy went with her mother to tell them of the happy change in their prospects. Mrs. Davis wept for joy, and her husband, when told that the plan was all Bessy's, put his hand on her head, saying, "God bless you, my child; you have no doubt saved my life by your kindness, for I feel sure I shall get well and strong there."

Before night they were moved into their new abode, where a good fire was burning, and where over the mantel, in letters of evergreen, were the words "Happy New Year. Welcome home." Bessy and Susy were waiting to receive them, and Bessy instantly drew Mrs. Davis to the cupboard, where was a generous supply of things for them to begin house-keeping with.

"These I bought with my money, instead of toys," said Bessy triumphantly; "and I never had a happier New Year's Day."

She had proved the truth of the text "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

BY MISS F. E. WINSLOW.

"What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; What I can I give Him—give Him my heart."



HE words were on a Christmas card, and they had a peculiar fascination for Mabel Grosvenor. When they had first come to

her from a friend on Christmas morning, she could not have said that she fairly understood their meaning. She puzzled over the quaint old English letters as they ran in and out to accommodate themselves to the design of the card, and finally she placed it among many others—Christmas and birthday cards and photographs of friends—in the lower half of the frame of the mirror which adorned the bureau in her comfortable bedroom. There were many other words among the collection well worthy of notice—choice selections from poets, mottoes of advice from eminent philosophers, loving wishes for happiness for the coming year from dear friends, sent to the girl who seemed to have everything on earth to ensure happiness; and yet among them all, as she came in and out, in gay preparations for pleasure during those Christmas holidays, these words only seemed to burn themselves into heart and brain: "Poor as I am, poor as I am."

"What can I give Him, poor as I am?"

Poor! Why, what girl of her acquaintance had more than she? Her feet sank at every step into rich carpets. Thick satins, furs, and plushes wrapped her delicate form whenever she went out; and as to mental advantages, books and pictures surrounded her, and the best schools and masters of the great intellectual city had been employed in her behalf. And now in her dawning womanhood she stood, prepared, it seemed, for almost any sphere of life or society she might choose to enter, and yet,

"poor as I am" in the presence of the Christ whom the Christmas season had been bringing nearer and nearer to her heart.

What were all these gifts? When He was in this world, the great earthly possessions of the young man who came to Him were as nothing in His eyes; Herod's wealth and Caesar's power had been as dross to this simple peasant of Galilee; the learning and wisdom of the Pharisees and scribes, with their famous teachers, had been utterly rejected by Him. Mabel felt that to come to Him with an offering of earthly gifts—money or education only—would be worse than useless. Yes, in anything that made life worth the living, Mabel was poor, and yet there was one gift He never despised, one offering He never rejected; the poorest and the richest of the sons of men could bring this gift to Him, sure of His loving acceptance of it, and of His glad appreciation of its value.

On the first day of the new year, Mabel felt that out of her poverty this one thing was hers to give, and she began the year with the words of her Christmas card transmuted into a glad personal acceptance.

"What I can I give Him—give Him my heart."

It was a bright Saturday afternoon of the first week in January, and a shivering girl, slight and tall, apparently about sixteen years of age, stood on the corner of Westminster Street, idly looking into the window of a book-store. There was a gaunt, hard, tired look about her, young as she was; and as Mabel Grosvenor stepped up in her bright, fresh clothes, a look of positive dislike and malice came over the girl's face. It was not that the girl knew Mabel, but the evident prosperity of her appearance and bearing grated upon her; the contrast between it and her own seedy apparel becoming all the more apparent to her. As Mabel scanned a list of books in the window, the girl began to wonder how she would look in a plush sack of wine color, and a hat with two long plumes curled about it; and it was not only the looks; a girl who wore such things must have everything warm underneath, and plenty of food at home—things of which poor Ethel was very much in need.

Just then Mabel turned and looked at her, and Ethel began again to study the Christmas card she had been languidly regarding when Mabel's arrival on the scene attracted her attention. Now for the whole week Mabel had been thinking, "To give Him one's heart means all—everything; all I can do and be belongs to Him. How can I show that I love Him? What can I do to teach other people to love Him too?" And when she saw the poor girl standing by her side, she longed to help her in some way. Her poverty would, perhaps, be easier to bear if she knew of Jesus and felt sure she belonged to Him. So hurrying into the store, Mabel purchased the card which had been of so much service to herself, and came out to find the girl still standing before the window.

"Do you like the card? Would you care to have one?" she said; and the girl, starting at being spoken to by a stranger, and half inclined to feel offended, was disarmed by the pleasant smile and kind words. They walked along together as Mabel tried

to tell her in a few words what the verse on the card meant.

"Yes, I know. I went to a Sunday-school in the village we lived in before we came here," said the girl.

"How long ago was that?" asked Mabel.

"Oh, 'most a year. Mother came down here to get more work to do, and when we first came, we all went to school; and then mother got sick and couldn't sew, and I stayed at home to take care of her."

"And did she get well?" asked Mabel.

"No," said the girl, her reserve quite melted by the interest of the other; "she died in November. A woman in the same house helped us, and I stayed at home to cook and mend the boys' clothes; and then, when the money we had was all gone, I got a place to tend in a store before Christmas. Now that the holidays are over, I have no more work to do and the children can't go to school 'cause their clothes are all worn out. Jim, he is ten, and sells newspapers; and that's all we have."

Here was work for Mabel to do. She went home with the girl, and found the children huddled in bed in a room without a fire. It was easy for her, with a well-filled purse, to provide food and warmth and clothing for this young family, but it was not so easy for her to give time and thought to their needs. Many a concert and art gathering dear to her heart were given up to find time for her new and absorbing pursuits which began to grow still dearer to her. She had given her heart to Christ, and time and effort, strength and money, followed as mere accessories to the gift. For Ethel she obtained a piece to take care of children during the early part of the day, so that she could return home in time to be with her brothers when school was out.

Encouraged by the real friendship of Mabel, Ethel began to grow into something of health and cheerfulness. There was no reason she could see beyond the one of pleasing the Master of whom she delighted to speak, which could have induced a girl of Mabel's position to give up time and pleasure for her good; and so, through her, Ethel learned to love Christ, something of whose character she saw reflected in her friend's life.

They were both connected with a mission school, one as teacher, the other as scholar. Mabel soon began to find Ethel a valuable assistant in bringing in the girls of her neighbourhood. The young teacher gave herself to them, studied their needs, and helped them as no one had done before. Ere the year was out, she had reason to believe that some of them were leading Christian lives, and helping others to begin in a similar way.

Again the New Year came with its renewed question to Mabel, "What can I give Him?" and with it the same old answer, "Son, daughter, give Me thy heart." The same heart, indeed, and only that, had Mabel to give, but was it no more of a gift than when the year before she had laid it untried upon the altar of her Lord? Yes, more and richer in the lessons it had learned of love for Him and work for His children, greater and more fit for an offering to Him who went about doing good, in that it had acquired something of the spirit of the

life-long example of Him who freely gave Himself to the needs of His brethren in a complete sacrifice of self.

CHRISTMAS.

[These two Christmas poems were crowded out of our last number. But they will not be amiss even now, and will bring back, as it were, the flavour of the holidays. Ed.]

WHAT shall I give to Thee, O Lord! The kings that came of old Laid softly on Thy cradle rude Their myrrh, and gems, and gold.

Thy martyrs gave their hearts' warm blood, Their ashes strewed Thy way, Thy spurned their lives as dreams and dust To speed Thy coming day.

We offer thee no lie nor dath, Our gifts to man we give; Dear Lord, on this Thy day of birth Oh, what dost Thou receive!

Show me Thyself in flesh once more, Thy feast I long to spread; To bring the water for thy feet, The ointment for Thy head.

There came a voice from heavenly heights; "Unclose thine eyes and see, Gifts to the least of those I love Thou givest unto me."

—Rose Terry Cooke.

CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT.

HERE is no hearth this Christmastide But some dear face is missing that was wont To make the joy and sunlight of our lives Sweeter to us than all the world beside.

In twilight hours the pain is ever keen, And yet there comes a thought of trembling joy, How bright the welcome when at last we gain The things on earth long hoped for though unseen.

—Methodist Magazine.

THE FISK JUBILEE SINGERS.

THIS remarkable company of coloured singers is now making its third tour through Canada, and we can with great confidence commend them to the patronage of the religious public. There are so-called companies of Jubilee singers whose concerts are a mere burlesque on the beautiful slave melodies of the south. But these singers are Christian ladies and gentlemen, and most of them have been themselves slaves, and are the children of slave parents. Their songs are most touching and beautiful, and recall Longfellow's verses.

Loud he sang the Psalm of David: He, a negro, and enslaved, Sang of Israel's victory, Sang of Zion, bright and free.

And the voice of his devotion Filled my soul with strange emotion; For its tones by turns were glad, Sweetly solemn, wildly sad.

The following letter was written by Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, under date of Sept. 7th, 1882:

Too much praise cannot be awarded the original Fisk Jubilee Troupe of Singers. They are beyond all praise. For artistic finish, for native simplicity, for that peculiar magnetic power which wins and charms, and holds, for spiritual earnestness that tells in the expression of the face as well as in the tones of the voice, this company has no equal. They have spent two seasons at Chautauqua, and I want them again for 1883.