

In fact, she tried to forget about Mission Band, and turned a cold shoulder on the hungry, little mite box all the while she was getting ready for bed. At least, she would not make up her mind until morning.

Hilda had been asleep some time, when she first became conscious of a funny shuffle, shuffle across her room. It was too heavy for a fairy and too light for Santa Claus. Just when she had come to this decision, she beheld a quaint little figure hurry past, clad in a long kimona with flowing sleeves and wearing many combs in her high hair. Hilda was too surprised to utter a word; so undisturbed, the stranger hastened on directly to the shelf where stood the mite box. On tip toe the little lady from Japan raised herself and lifted it down, shaking it gently. Then she repeated the act close to her ear. Not a sound.

In bed, Hilda hid behind the sheet. What would she not have given to hear the silver ring of a single dime! Five would have made a peal of bells. Supposing, just supposing the visitor should search the top bureau drawer! How could the red purse ever be explained when Miss Anne had said Christmas must be for all people. But there seemed no such danger, for shaking her head sadly the Japanese maiden put back the box and flitted away as she had come.

Hilda gave a sigh of relief and lowered the sheet an inch, only to behold a second figure approaching. The bare, brown toes of this little Indian lad made no noise as they sank into the soft rug. He, likewise, proceeded directly towards the mite box, making in time the same sad discovery, empty silence. Again to the observer came the moment of suspense lest the bulging red purse beneath the pile of ribbons be revealed. However the second stranger departed, as the first, with only the disappointed shaking of the head.

So the procession continued across Hilda's room, children from Africa, China, Arabia, all bent on the same errand, all failing alike to hear the sound of hope and promise. Then lastly, just as the little girl felt she could stand no more, there came the final figure, clad in white and radiating light. The Christmas Child, Himself. Wrapt in wonder, Hilda saw Him make his way as had the others, and

she knew He must be repeating the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these." She longed to cry out as she watched Him lift down the box, for in her heart she could not bear that He should miss the music of her Christmas offering. But her lips dumb could not frame the words. Accordingly He shook His head sadly, very sadly; for, unlike the rest, He was aware of the red pocketbook. Yet even as He turned away, the light grew brighter and brighter. The next moment Hilda awoke to the glory of the morning sunshine.

"Oh," she cried in a wave of glad relief. "It was only a dream—but the realest dream I ever had."

In a second she was out of bed and traveling the path of the dream figures. She lifted down the tin mite box and ran with it to the bureau. From the top drawer she pulled the red leather purse. Nor did she stop with the five silver dimes. Again and again she dropped in her offering. Then she raised the box to her ear and shook it, delighting in the clash of silver.

"Joy to the world," it surely sang, only in the carol of the mite box, "Mite, mite, mite, mite."—The Glad Tidings.

GOD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT AND OURS

In just a little now it will be Christmas, the day that every Christian boy and girl loves better than any other day in all the year.

Margaret Applegarth says, "The angels and the stars can never forget what they saw that first Christmas night. I think the babies help them to remember! White babies in your home and my home; yellow babies in China . . . ; brown babies in India . . . ; red Indian babies laced in tree cradles; Eskimo babies in furry bags; little black babies in Africa,—the stars and the angels can't see one bit of difference between any of them!

But it makes me feel a little sorry to remember that, when we are having a merry Christmas there will be homes and homes all over God's world, where His Family won't even know it is Christmas at all, because they never so much as heard about Jesus.

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