

Phrygia, green and blue marble from Libya, Black marble with white veins and white with black veins, granite from Egypt, and porphyry from Sais. Ten thousand men were employed upon the work, and it was completed in eight years. The edifice is crowned with a cupola surrounded by nine smaller ones. They are supported by four columns each, and between them are eight porphyry columns from the temple of the Sun at Baalbec. Four green pilasters from the temple of Ephesus support the women's choir, and there are sixty-seven other columns, all of granite or red marble, and delicately carved, in various parts of the building. Inside the great cupola is a gold inscription from the Koran, in letters thirty feet high, meaning "God is the light of heaven and earth." At the four corners of the central portion of the building are representations of the four seraphims in mosaic, originally called archangels, but now named Abubekr, Omar, Osman, and Ali. The original sites of the altar and pulpit have been altered, being now placed in a southeasterly direction, (towards Mecca); and the pulpit is adorned with two flags, as a sign of the triumph of Mahometanism over Judaism and Christianity. Nothing now remains of the original altar, and all the more valuable articles in the church were distributed by Sultan Mahmoud among his troops at the capture of Constantinople in 1453.

Children's Department.

FATHER, TAKE MY HAND.

THE ANSWER.

The way is dark, my child! but leads to light,
I would not always have thee walk by sight,
My dealings now thou canst not understand.
I meant it so; but I will take thy hand,
And through the gloom
Lead safely home
My child!

The day goes fast, my child! But is the night
Darker to me than day? In me is light!
Keep close to me, and every spectral band
Of fears shall vanish. I will take thy hand,
And through the night
Lead up to light
My child!

The way is long, my child! But it shall be
Not one step longer than is best for thee;
And thou shalt know, at last, when thou shalt
stand
Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand,
And quick and straight
Lead to heaven's gate
My child!

The path is rough, my child! But oh! how sweet
Will be the rest for weary pilgrims meet,
When thou shalt reach the borders of that land
To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand,
And safe and blest
With me shalt rest,
My child!

The throng is great, my child! But at thy side
Thy Father walks; then be not terrified,
For I am with thee; will thy foes command
To let thee freely pass; will take thy hand
And through the throng
Lead safe along
My child!

The cross is heavy, child! Yet there was One
Who bore a heavier for thee: My Son—
My well-beloved. For Him bear thine; and stand
With Him, at last; and, from thy Father's hand,
Thy cross laid down,
Receive a crown,
My child!

HELENE, THE LITTLE MISSIONARY OF TYRE AND HASBEYA.—At Hasbeya, on Mount Hermon, where is now a population of 5,000, there was an orphan girl, the grand-daughter of a Greek priest. She was a gentle pretty girl, about eleven years of age, and had learned to read and love her Bible,

through the instructions she had received at Mrs. Bowen Thompson's Mission School in Beyrout.

She was about to go to Tyre, for a three month's sojourn with her grandmother. At parting, Mrs. Thompson gave her two Arabic Testaments, three copies of St. John's Gospel, and the Psalms as she had promised that she would try and teach some girls at Tyre.

"I hope you never will forget that you have learnt at school, but will try and teach others," said Mrs. Thompson.

She blushed deeply and said, "I like very much to teach others."

One of her school-fellows who was standing by, said, "Oh, yes, she likes very much to teach others." When she was at Zachleh, last summer with her mother, she used to teach a great many, not only little children, but some that were very big; and taught the school mistress too, because she could not read well, and did not know as Helene does.

OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS.

Our Blessed Lord God, manifest in the flesh, grew up gradually to man's estate, like other people. He was first an infant, unconscious of what was going on around Him; then a child, with powers of mind just dawning, and lastly a boy, before He became a man. Now fix your mind on this point for a few minutes. Christ might have been made full-grown at once.

Once upon a time there was a man who was so made: it was Adam. Adam never was an infant, or a child, or a boy. Adam was unlike all his descendants in this, that he never was dependent upon parents, never had any home of his childhood to which he could look back. The moment after God created him he was fully conscious of what was going on around him; his powers were quite ripe, and he began to observe, and think and reason at once.

Now, our Blessed Lord is called by St. Paul "the last Adam," "the second man;" that is to say, Adam was a type or figure of Christ. And one might have expected, therefore, that our Lord would be what Adam had been—a man sent into the world full-grown. Infancy, childhood, boyhood, are very humbling conditions. Infants cannot think at all; if they can just take notice of some shining object held before their eyes, that is as much as they can do. Children can understand a few things; but there are many subjects which, because their minds are so weak, cannot possibly be explained to them. Boys and girls can learn and receive instruction from others; but their judgment is not formed, and it would be a great risk indeed to leave a matter of any importance to their decision. And so when the Son of God, who had lain in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, condescended to come into the world and to be made in the likeness of men, surely He would not first become an infant, then a child, then a boy, but would appear as a man at once. Whereas, on the contrary, we are expressly told that the Child Jesus "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom;" and again, that "Jesus" (as to His human soul) "increased in wisdom," as well as in "stature."

Let us reverently seek to understand why this was so.

Firstly: our Blessed Lord's condescension is infinite; and therefore in coming into the world He desired to stoop as low as ever He could stoop, in order to set us the more striking example of lowliness of mind. Therefore He preferred for His entrance into the world, the condition of an unconscious babe, and of a little child dependent upon its parents, to that of a full-grown and independent man.

It was the same when He went out of the world. He might have died the death of one of the world's heroes, a gallant death, which men admire, or at least He might have died in a private chamber, amid the tears and sighs of those who loved and adored Him; but this would not have been going low enough for Him, because the infinitely great One is also infinitely humble. "I am meek," says He, "and lowly of heart." And He gave proof of it by coming into the world as a babe, and going out of it a criminal. His death

was by a public execution—a scene which usually draws together the lowest rabble; and among the last sounds which greeted His ear were jeers and revilings. So His course ended as it had begun—in the lowliness of an inconceivable condescension.

Secondly: our Lord, out of His infinite compassion for us, earnestly desired to sympathize with men in all their trials, and in every condition in which they can be placed, in order that He might bless and comfort them by His sympathy. No one class of people was to be able to say, "The Lord Jesus never knew what our trials were." And therefore it would not have answered His purpose to come into the world in a peculiar way, as Adam did, or go out of it in a peculiar way, as Enoch and Elijah did. No, He would come into it by the usual gate—infancy, and go out also by the usual gate—death. So that the smallest child, the youngest boy, cannot say, "The Son of God is so great that He cannot enter into my feelings, or stoop to help me in my little troubles." And the man or woman who is laid upon a very suffering death-bed cannot say, "The Blessed Jesus, Who is now exalted to God's right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, cannot understand what I suffer—this sickness of heart, this harassing restlessness, this weary, moaning wakefulness, while all other inmates of the house are fast asleep." Oh, who can possibly understand the bodily pain and weakness which accompany death as He can?

Lastly: one can quite see this, that for a grown-up person never to have known childhood, or home, or a mother's care, would cut him off from all the most beautiful and tender associations of our nature. If there are drawbacks about infancy and childhood, inasmuch as children are very weak, ignorant, and dependent, and can not even earn their own bread, there is a good deal to make up for the drawbacks. It makes a man tender, as no other thought can, to look back on his childhood and early home, on the strong interest which his parents used to take in him, and on the sacrifices which they were at all times ready to make for him. Now our Blessed Lord was to be infinitely tender, in order that He might attract the miserable and suffering to Himself: and He was to exhibit all the beauties and graces of which human character is capable; and therefore it was that he willed to have a home of childhood, and to lip his earliest prayers at a mother's knee, which is the way in which all of us learn to pray. These experiences contributed to make His human soul tender.

My child, the object of your God in becoming a child, will be fulfilled in you, if you will only do these three things.

Firstly. Take to Him all your little troubles and trials in prayer, and assure yourself that He is most ready to hear and help you; nay, that there is nothing He more delights in than to see the young draw near to His feet. You wrong Him if you imagine that anything that vexes and tries you is beneath His gracious notice and care. Why did He become a child, but to assure children of His sympathy with them?

Secondly. Take Him for your example. Read over often—once a week at least—the few verses which give us an account of His childhood (St. Luke, ii. 40; to the end). Observe there His love of God's house of prayer, His teachableness, His desire for instruction, His submission to His parents (while all the while He was their God). His growth in wisdom and in favour with God and man; and try to copy Him in these points.

Thirdly. Trust with all your heart in the goodness which He as a child exhibited, and which was perfect goodness, such as yours can be. Only for the sake of that goodness of His, will God forgive your faults, your fits of temper, your indolence, your greediness, your selfishness, your falsehood. Plead with God, when your conscience tells you you have done wrong, the merits of the Holy Child Jesus; and God will then look at you, not as you are in yourself, but through Him (just as when you look at white paper through coloured glass you see the paper as if it were the colour of the glass), and will forgive and bless you, and smile upon you with Fatherly love. Amen