

and eager in the sunshine, to make a passage to his heavenly home, and presently, in the storms and chills of the world he loses his way and sinks. He is vicious or a drunkard, or maddened by money-making; he has lost the faith in God, the love for his neighbour, the hearty fellowship which other men have; he has lost the guiding which the light of the conscience gives; he is sinking down to death in freezing depths.

But there is always one spot warm for him while he lives; there is always one voice calling to him, which, if he will hear and heed, will bring him home.

It may be his child, with most men it is the remembrance of their mother. It may be the love of music, or of green growing things, or a hidden reference for the long neglected Bible. It is often a single, noble, fine trait in himself which gives the lie to his coarser nature.

But whatever it be, when we see the sign of it in any man, however criminal he may have been, we may know that the ice is not yet closed over his soul, that home still waits for him yonder, and that God has sent his messenger to summon him to come to it.

While God thus calls him home, and shows him the way, it is not for us to condemn and thrust him downward, but rather to help and encourage him.

You have been told of the horses and cows in Holland that wear shoes made of broad, flat boards, to keep them from sinking into the soft earth. Here is another fact to put with it: In Bohemia, when geese are to be driven long distances to market, they are shod for the journey. The method of shoeing is as simple as it is effective. The geese are made to walk repeatedly over patches of tar mixed with sand. This forms a hard crust on their feet, which enables them to travel great distances without becoming sore-footed.—*Selection.*

**THE WATCH MENDED.**

A little boy had a very nice watch, but it would not go right. It had a very pretty case and face; but it sometimes went too fast and sometimes too slow. He asked his mother what he should do about it. She told him to take it to the watchmaker's. He did so, and he said, "Master John (the little boy's name was John Wilson), it has its hands all right, but it will not go right. Therefore leave it with me, and come again in a few days, and I will tell you what is the matter with it." John went again to him in a few days, and the watchmaker said to him, "I opened your watch, and I found there was the right number of wheels, gears, pins, and screws; but I found a little part called the 'spring' which was wrong—it had a bad spring—and because the main-

spring was wrong it sometimes went too fast, and sometimes too slow."

Boys are all like watches. Something within them goes tick-tick—and they have hands, and inside works. But how do they go? Sometimes too fast, and sometimes too slow. Does not the tongue sometimes go too fast or too slow? Are not the feet sometimes too fast or too slow? Are not the hands sometimes going wrong? How is this? Let us examine. We must look at the mainspring—the heart, "for out of it are the issues of life." Everything depends upon the "heart." Go' always looks most at the "heart."

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**Sunbeam.**

TORONTO, APRIL 2, 1904.

**EASTER IN RUSSIA.**

Some one has said that "All Russia kisses all the rest of Russia at Easter," and this is pretty nearly true. To be sure, Easter in Russia does not fall on the same day as with us, since in that country they reckon time by the "Old Style;" but the same wonderful fact is celebrated, and some of the Easter customs are very curious. The Easter kissing is one of the most peculiar of these customs, and the person who should refuse to take part in it would be looked upon as a churl, or even something worse. For the ceremony is closely connected with the religion of the country, and how can one be considered glad that Christ has risen unless he kisses his neighbour—no matter who or what the neighbour may be?

When day begins at midnight, and a little before midnight all good Russians go to church. The Emperor and all his family, to the great delight, no

doubt, of the little princes and princesses, assemble in the imperial chapel, and the commoner people all over the Empire fill the churches and chapels. Solemn, prayerful silence reigns, as the clock begins striking the hour of midnight. At the last stroke inner doors are thrown open and priests come forth, carrying censers, and chanting, "Christ is risen." The song is taken up by the choir, and the priests respond, "Christ is risen from the dead," walking through the congregation, and swinging their censers as they go.

And now the kissing begins. The church is a blaze of light, for, with the appearance of the priests, the illumination, both inside and outside, begins; bells are ringing, cannon are thundering, and rockets are blazing in the sky.

The kissing goes on. Little groups of friends and acquaintances kiss each other rapturously. Those who have only the slightest possible acquaintance kiss each other, and at every kiss they say, "Christ is risen," and "Christ is risen from the dead."

And the kissing does not end here. All night and the next day, and for several days thereafter, relatives, friends, and chance acquaintances salute one another in this way. The peasants kiss as generally as do the upper classes. Clerks in public offices kiss one another. The general of an army kisses all the officers under his command; the colonel of a regiment kisses all the officers below him, and the captain of a company kisses all his soldiers!

Maybe you think the Emperor is excused from this ceremony. Not at all. It is his duty not only to kiss all the members of his household at this time, but the poor man has to kiss all his officers on parade, and a delegation of soldiers besides, who represent the grand army. These military parades last several days, for the army of Russia is very large, and comprises many regiments, and the Emperor must get very tired of the performance. Think of kissing a whole army, as it were!

This custom does not seem so strange in this strange land as it would seem to us in Canada. In Russia, kissing is not confined to women and children, as it is largely with us. Dignified officials salute each other in this way. The simple peasant labourer greets his friend with a kiss, and these signs of cordial friendship, which would excite mirth here when displayed between man and man, are quite the thing there.

Easter should be a time of heartfelt rejoicing among all people, and what more natural expression of joy can there be than a loving recognition of one's neighbour? So, before we laugh at the Russian custom, let us ask if it does not hold some hints for our Easter gladness.

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