

music floated out to their ears. They were just about to go up the wide marble steps, when Essie stopped suddenly with an exclamation of surprise.

"Oh, Frank, there is one of the babies out in the cold!"

And there, sure enough, on the balustrade, with the light falling full on him, with snow on his uncovered head, was a little undressed baby.

"What makes you stay out here in the cold?" asked Essie, eagerly. "Why don't you come in?"

"I have no clothes to wear," answered the child.

"Oh, you can have my coat," said Essie, quickly taking off the little softly-lined wrap. The baby came down to the lower step and allowed Essie to put him into her coat; and then the three children went in together.

Nobody seemed to notice that the baby's feet were bare, or that his golden curls were covered with snow. Every child seemed to be bent on enjoying himself, without much thought of others.

"What great lights!" exclaimed the baby; "as many as the stars; where did they come from?"

"Money bought them," said Essie.

"But why don't they take some of them down to the poor homes, where the children go to bed this Christmas Eve in the dark," asked the child.

"I don't know," answered Essie, doubtfully.

"How did they find so many flowers?" asked the child again.

"Money bought them," said Essie.

"But," cried the baby, "those little children I tell you of have no money to buy beds or blankets; they lie and shiver this Christmas time."

Essie was silent.

"And can these children eat all that?" continued the strange child, pointing to the loaded tables; "there are little children that I know who are crying for bread; one bit of all this might save their lives. Come away; would you dare to stay and help to waste all this, while all those little ones of my Heavenly Father perish with cold and hunger?"

And Essie turned and followed him out into the darkness. She dared not ask the name of this strange, strange child, but she felt by the light in his eyes that it must be the Christmas babe, the Christ child, and, oh, how sorry she was that he should come and find them doing all for themselves, doing nothing for those little ones for whom he had come to die.

"Essie! Essie! wake up for dinner," said her mother, giving her a gentle shake to rouse her up from the library sofa. The guests were gone from the parlour, mother had changed her dress, papa had come in, dinner was ready—and all the rest was a dream!

But the dream made Essie very eager about getting clothes, and food, and blankets for those little babies out in the cold, and the mother gave each child the

ten dollars that would have gone to the ball, to spend in that way.

As long as she lives, Essie will remember the grieved and surprised look of that dream baby, when he found so many little ones taking their own ease and pleasure, with no thought for the little ones out in the cold.

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL PAPERS.

The best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular.	Yearly Sub
Christian Guardian, weekly	\$1 00
Methodist Magazine and Review, 96 pp., monthly, illustrated.	2 00
Christian Guardian and Methodist Magazine and Review	2 75
Magazine and Review, Guardian and Onward together	3 25
The Wesleyan, Halifax, weekly	1 00
Sunday-school Banner, 65 pp., 8v., monthly	0 60
Onward, 8 pp., 40., weekly, under 2 copies	0 09
2 copies and over	0 20
Pleasant Hours, 1 pp., 40., weekly, single copies	0 20
Less than 20 copies	0 25
Over 20 copies	0 21
Sunbeam, fortnightly, less than 10 copies	0 15
10 copies and upwards	0 12
Happy Days, fortnightly, less than 10 copies	0 15
10 copies and upwards	0 12
Low Drops, weekly, (2 cents per quarter)	0 07
Berean Senior Quarterly (quarterly)	0 20
Berean Leaf, monthly	0 05
Berean Intermediate Quarterly (quarterly)	0 00
Quarterly Review Service. By the year, 21 cents a dozen; \$2 per 100. Per quarter, 6 cents a dozen; 50 cents per 100.	

THE ABOVE PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE

Address WILLIAM BRIGGS,
Methodist Book and Publishing House,
29 to 33 Richmond St. West, and 30 to 36 Temperance St.,
Toronto.

C. W. COATES, S. F. HUESTIS,
2176 St. Catherine Street, Wesleyan Book Room,
Montreal, Que. Halifax, N.S.

Sunbeam.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 25, 1899.

ONE OF GOD'S LITTLE MINISTERS.

One night when a family were all gathered around the fire a little girl looked up and asked: "Papa, why does everybody like Eva, our neighbour's little girl? She has got a weak back, and can't play like the rest of us, and isn't often at school, and yet everybody likes her. How's that?"

"Why," said her father, "look at that lamp; it is a very frail thing, and doesn't make any noise, yet it makes this room very bright and pleasant, does it not? The lamp gives light, and little Eva gives love; and that is why people love her."

Yes, that was it; Eva was always "ministering before the Lord," for they who love do always that. Won't you try, each of you, to be one of God's little ministers?

INSTINCT OF AN OLD RAT.

On a very warm day in early summer, I happened to be standing near a chicken-coop in a back yard, when I noticed the head of a very gray and grizzled rat thrust from a neighbouring rat-hole, and concluded to watch the movements of the veteran. After a careful survey of the surroundings, our old rodent seemed to be satisfied that all was right, and made a cautious exit from the home retreat. A fresh pan of water had been recently

placed before the chicken-coop, and the water looked a friendly invitation to the thirsty old rat, who immediately started towards it.

The rat had not reached the pan before five half-grown young ones rushed ahead and tried to be the first at the water. The old rat thereupon immediately made a leap like a kangaroo, and was at the edge of the dish in advance of the foremost of her litter. Then ensued a most remarkable occurrence. The mother raised herself on her haunches, and bit and scratched her offspring so severely whenever they attempted to reach the water that they all finally scudded away, evidently very much astonished and frightened at the strange and unaccountable behaviour of their mother. When the little ones were at a safe distance, the reasons for her extraordinary behaviour began to be revealed at once in the intelligent action of the old mother rat. She first whetted her whiskers in the water, looked suspiciously about her, then very cautiously and carefully took a dainty little sip of the liquid. She tasted it as tentatively and critically as a professional tea-taster, and when she was satisfied that it contained no poisonous or other deleterious matter, she gave a couple of squeaks, which quickly brought her young and thirsty brood to her side, and all fearlessly drank to their fill. Does not this look very like reason?

THE GRANDMOTHER.

A letter to one of her friends from a lady who spent some time among the peasants of the Tyrol, says:

The morning after our arrival we were awakened by the sound of a violin and flutes under the window, and hurrying down found the little house adorned as for a feast—garlands over the door, and wreathing a high chair which was set in state.

The table was already covered with gifts, brought by the young people whose music we had heard. The whole neighbourhood were kinsfolk, and these gifts came from uncles and cousins in every far-off degree. They were very simple, for the donors are poor—knitted gloves, a shawl, baskets of flowers, jars of fruit, loaves of bread; but upon all some little message of love was pinned.

"Is there a bride in the house?" I asked of my landlord.

"Ach Nein!" he said. "We do not make such a bother about our young people. It is the grandmother's birthday!"

The grandmother in her spectacles, white apron, and high velvet cap, was a heroine all day, sitting in state to receive visits, and dealing out slices from a sweet loaf to each one who came. I could not but remember certain grandmothers at home, just as much loved as she, probably, but whose dull, sad lives were never brightened by any such gust of pleasure as this; and I thought we could learn much from these poor mountaineers.