

The very heart of faith's dim rays beamed on them from afar,  
And that same hour they rose from off their thrones to track the star;  
They cared not for the cruel scorn of those who called them mad:  
Messiah's star was shining, and their royal hearts were glad.


And they have knelt at Bethlehem! The Everlasting Child  
They saw upon His mother's lap, earth's Monarch meek and mild;  
His little feet, with Mary's leave, they pressed with loving kiss,  
Oh, what are thrones! Oh, what are crowns, to such a joy as this!

Ah me! what broad daylight of faith our thankless souls receive,  
How much we know of Jesus, and how easy to believe;  
'Tis the noonday of His sunshine, of His sun that setteth never;  
Faith gives us crowns, and makes us kings, and our kingdom is forever.

Oh glory be to God on high, for these Arabian kings,—  
These miracles of royal faith with eastern offerings;  
For Gaspar and for Melchior and Balthazzar, who from far  
Found Mary out and Jesus, by the shining of a star.

—Faber.

### THE GREAT FAMILY.

OME years ago a good clergyman, called Mr. Stirling, went to live in a hut on the shores of a barren island at the south of America. The island was full of savages who had often killed poor sailors who were wrecked on the rocks. But Mr. Stirling knew that God wished these poor people to learn about Him. And so he bravely went and lived among them for many months. He heard them speak the most strange words; their talk was like the jabbering of monkeys. But by degrees he began to understand what the people said. He was good to them, and gave them fishhooks and buttons, and knives and biscuits. So they began to trust him, and did him no harm.

But how was he to teach them about God? How was he to tell them about Christ and His Church? They had no word which meant "God" or "Church." So he said to them that the world had more people in it than the stars in the sky, that among these people a great Father has a family of sons and daughters whom He loves, and that though they are many He knows all.

Now these Fuegian people, though they were cruel to strangers, were very fond of their own families—parents and children loved each other as much as English people do. And so they began to see what their teacher meant by the Great Family all over the world; and when some of them began to love God, they asked

Mr. Stirling how they could be taken into His family; and he told them just as St. Peter and St. Paul used to do, that they must repent and be baptized; and many have been brought into the Family since then from wild Fuegia.

We are, dear children, in that Great Family, as you have been told before. The Church is called the Communion of Saints; that means all true Christian people are joined together, like brothers and sisters in a family. When a prettily dressed child of rich parents sees in the park, or in the street, a poor little child begging, or selling matches or violets, in bad thin clothes, she should try to help that little girl, because she is a sister—she is one of God's family. The rich child and the poor child belong to Christ, and so they belong to each other. Jesus died for them both. God has taken both into His family. God means His richer children to help the poorer ones, as brothers and sisters are bound to help each other.

This Great Family is in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. And we can give money, and pray to God to gather more children to Himself through the preaching of missionaries. There are many more of God's family resting in the sweet peace of Paradise, and waiting to hear the trumpet sound, when all the dead shall rise, and every one, young and old, black and white, rich and poor, of the Great Family shall come together to the Father's House.

### A STICK.

GREATNESS is not usefulness. There are many things too great to be useful. What would a crowbar be worth in repairing a watch? Persons sometimes belittle themselves, and seem to regard themselves of no account.

Says Marion Lawrence to Sunday school teachers: "Don't allow yourselves to get discouraged in your work. One of my teachers came to me one day and said, 'I cannot teach this class, I am only a stick.' I replied, do you know what the Lord did with a *stick*? He opened the Red Sea with a *stick*. He brought water out of the rock with a *stick*. You go back to the class and be a *stick*, be a good *stick*. That is all the Lord wants of you.' The trouble is that we want to be something that we are not. If we are crooked sticks the Lord will find crooked places for us to fill."

No man should be discouraged about his place, his opportunities, or his calling, but each for himself should look to God for guidance, for help, for wisdom that cometh from above; and those who look to God with joyous trust, will find that He will never forget them or forsake them, but will guide their efforts to His glory and the good of other men. And the work of the small may be as useful as the work of the great, for it is not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.