

"voluntary," but the opening of service that day was very unusual; a simple gospel hymn was sung. From a sweet voice the words directly fell upon Mrs. Whitcomb's ear:

"I gave, I gave My life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
I gave, I gave My life for thee,
What hast thou given for Me?"

The prayers which followed were embodiments of two petitions: that the people might be ready to make large and grateful return for the blessings of salvation, and be enabled to regard the Lord's work with a spirit purified from selfishness and avarice. After the reading of notices the pastor said, "The collection to-day will be taken after the sermon. Let us, my dear people, consider together our duty and privilege in the matter of giving to the Lord. Let us look at the urgent need for increased liberality in every part of the vineyard, and then make unto the Master a free-will offering both sweet and acceptable."

Thinking of her husband's unaccountable conduct; of the opening hymn, with its refrain still echoing through her mind, and of the unusual postponement of the collection till the close of service, Mrs. Whitcomb did not pay much heed to the discourse. Meditation during the sermon is ever a potent soporific, and such it proved.

It was most natural that her waking thoughts should follow Mrs. Whitcomb in sleep, and that she should, in dreams, see good old Deacon Beman come down the aisle to gather the "tithes into the storehouse." The dreamer very vividly went through the form of taking a half dollar from her pocket, and lifting it to the extended box, when lo—it was a box no longer! With chilled heart the astonished lady saw the hard, lifeless wood assume the appearance of living flesh. It was a hand now, and from its pierced veins flowed drops of blood. Looking up she beheld a form like unto the Son of God, with a face which betokened a knowledge of grief and acquaintance with sorrows. Almost paralyzed with remorse the sleeper cried, "Have mercy upon me, oh, Lord! I am not worthy to put aught into my Saviour's hand."

With pained and pleading look these words were spoken:

"I gave my life for thee,
Wilt thou give naught to Me?"

Quickly the half dollar was thrown away by the trembling listener, and a coin of gold was laid instead upon the bleeding palm. As the shining bit touched the wound the flow of blood was lessened. In the attitude of divine benediction the Lord Christ thus spoke: "Disciple, thou hast wrought a good work upon Me. The tears of my people must be wiped away; the nations must be purged from sin; the gospel of good tidings must sound in every ear before this bleeding wound can be wholly healed. Blessed be they who hasten on the day."

Deep organ tones wakened the sleeper when the collection was about to be taken. Clutching at her husband's arm Mrs. Whitcomb whispered, eagerly, "John, you won't put in that fifty cents, will you? Why, dear it's the hand of the Lord!" In bewilderment the judge looked at his agitated wife, who pleaded again: "I mean the contribution box, John; it is the hand of Christ, our Lord! Could you lay a few cents upon it?" "No, wife," was the joyous reply, "I will give fifteen dollars." "Very well, and I'll give as much more."

Was it his wife who thus spoke, the very same who had outwitted him in the morning? Yes, the very same woman renewed. She had seen the Lord and heard His

words; she had learned the deep meaning of the Saviour's "inasmuch." Never again would good judgment keep her from ministering to her crucified Redeemer, through the poor, the sorrowing, and the benighted. The contribution box had been transformed; but still more wonderful and blessed was the transformation which had taken place in one of the King's daughters!—*Congregationalist.*

An Envelope Party.

A special effort is sometimes made in our circles to raise money for the cause of missions. We know of no better way for any benevolent object than an envelope party. It is at least free from objections.

The invitation may be given from the pulpit with other notices, or a written card may be sent from the president to each member of the circle, inviting her to come at a certain time to a certain place, and bring in a sealed envelope such gift as her heart may dictate. The gifts may be with or without name as may be thought best, or as each individual may choose. Each envelope should contain, besides money, some selection from Scripture, stanza of a hymn, brief quotation, or short letter expressive of interest in the cause, thanksgiving for mercies received, or new purpose of consecration,—anything which the heart may prompt.

The anticipated meeting should be talked over by those interested, and any persons who cannot come should be invited to send their envelopes.

On the appointed evening, the opening of the envelopes, reading the contents, counting the money, with prayers, remarks, and singing interspersed, will make a very pleasant occasion. And the amount received, we venture to say, will in most cases exceed what would be netted from a fair or other entertainment. For this party there will be no previous outlay of time and strength, and no consequent exhaustion and weariness. No money will be wasted on side issues, and there will be the pleasure arising from having made a direct offering to the Lord.

We know of such a party recently held for the purpose of furnishing a church. The gifts amounted to about \$800; and the fitting quotations and bright original letters contained in the envelopes, together with a little music, made it one of the most enjoyable gatherings ever held by that society.—*Helping Hand.*

Do little things as if they were great, because of the majesty of Jesus Christ, who dwells in them; and do great things as if they were little and easy, because of His omnipotence.—*Pascal.*

Zebedee.

I think the Lord would often come to see thee,
Thou generous Father! grudging not thy sons
To strange new service; no call came to free *Thee*
From mending nets or netting stronger ones.
Thou would'st sit bravely, and now patiently,
And maybe, thinking of the Lord, would'st sing
For joy, that every day thy sons would see
His face and hear His voice in journeying.
I think thou saw'st, too—far in after years—
The sword that pierced thy faithful James' heart;
While o'er thy lake a vision dim appears
Of what thy favoured John saw! Oh! thou we'rt
What we may be, or mending nets, or sailin' ships—
Brave to endure—swift to obey—calls of Christ's lips!