

give a penny; and I only wish that I had more to give."

"I call that a *silver penny*," said the steward.

"But now I have the best of all," he added, as he held up a clean and bright new copper coin.

"This I shall call a *golden penny*; for as I held out the plate to get it, I heard the boy that gave it say, 'I love my Saviour; He wants the poor heathen to know how much He loves them, and to learn His pleasant ways. I will give my penny gladly for His sake. And I would give anything I have to carry out His wish, if I knew He wanted it.'—*Rev. John Crawford, in Missionary World.*

A BRAVE CONGO BOY.

THERE never was a more touching story of filial devotion than that told by a Congo chief, Essalaka, to Captain Coquilhot:—

"You know the big island near my town," he said. "Well, yesterday, soon after the sun came up, one of my women and her little boy started for the island in a canoe. The boy is about twelve years old. He says that, while his mother was paddling, she saw something in the water, and leaned over to look at it. Then he saw a crocodile seize his mother and drag her out of the canoe. Then the crocodile and the woman sank out of sight.

"The paddle was lying in the canoe. The boy picked it up to paddle back to the village. Then he thought, 'Oh, if I could only scare the crocodile, and get my mother back!' He could tell by the moving water where the crocodile was. He was swimming just under the surface toward the land. Then the boy followed the crocodile just as fast as he could paddle. Very soon the crocodile reached the island and went out on land. He laid the woman's body on the ground. Then he went back into the river and swam away. You know why he did this? He wanted his mate, and started out to find her.

"Then the little fellow paddled fast to where his mother was lying. He jumped out of the boat and ran to her. There was a big wound in her breast, and her eyes were shut. He felt sure she was dead. He is strong, but he could not lift her. He dragged her body to the canoe. He knew the crocodile might come back any minute and kill him. He used all his strength. Little by little he got his mother's body into the canoe. Then he pushed away from the shore and started home.

"We had not seen the boy and his mother at all. Suddenly we heard shouting on the river, and we saw the boy paddling as hard as he could. Every two or three strokes he would look behind him. Then we saw a crocodile swimming fast toward the canoe. If he reached it, you know what he would do? He would upset it with a blow, and both the boy and his mother would be lost. Eight or nine of us jumped into canoes, and started for the boy. The crocodile had nearly overtaken the canoe, but we reached it in time. We scared the crocodile away, and brought the canoe to shore. The boy stepped out on the ground and fell down, he was so frightened and tired. We carried him into one of my huts, and took his mother's body in there too. We thought she was dead.

"But after a little she opened her eyes. She could whisper only two or three words. She asked for the boy. We laid him beside her on her arm. She stroked him two or three times with her hand. But she was hurt so badly! Then she shut her eyes, and did not open them nor speak again. Oh, how the little boy cried! But he had saved his mother's body from the crocodile."—*Boston Herald.*

CHRISTMAS EVE IN NEW MEXICO.

AS the manner in celebrating Christmas by the Mexican people is very different from that of the people in the East, perhaps a description of it may be interesting to you.

For nine nights before Christmas fires are built in front of most of the houses in town. Each night a procession of men marches through the streets, the leaders carrying an image which they call *Nino Dios* (the Child-God). The people sing, as the procession moves along, a song about St. Mary asking lodging for her child.

I will simply describe the celebration of the last night, or Christmas Eve, as I saw it. A procession, composed for the most part of women, came through the streets carrying lanterns and a cradle, over which was an arch of artificial flowers. In the cradle lay the *Nino Dios*. As the procession stopped in front of a house, a woman came out, bringing coals of fire on a shovel. She knelt down in front of the idol and offered incense, and then went back to the house. The procession then came up to the door and chanted a hymn, asking for lodging for the *Nino Dios*. From within came the response that the house was full, and there was no room for the child. The procession moved on to the next house, and did the same as at the first, and again admittance was refused. Then they went to another house, which they were allowed to enter with the image. This was placed upon an altar, which had been erected for the purpose, and they all knelt down and worshipped it.

After this I went to the chapel, where another party of people were holding services. Upon the altar in the chapel were images of Joseph and Mary bending over the image of a child in a cradle. The people were singing praises to Joseph and Mary. About ten o'clock, a stalwart Mexican, in full Comanche dress, entered, and, taking his bow and arrow from his back, threatened to shoot the image of the child. A young lady knelt down in front of the image, while the leader of the singers explained to the Comanche that the child was the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and that angels and archangels did Him reverence. The Comanche then kissed the image of the child, and left.—*Rev. W. C. Montgomery, San Mateo, New Mexico.*

A CHINESE Christian recently asked Archdeacon Moule how many clergymen there were in England. Being desired to guess, he said: "It's a little country, perhaps fifteen hundred;" and being told there were forty-five thousand, said in astonishment: "Forty-five thousand! then you can well spare one thousand for China."—*Spirit of Missions.*