

himself and thinking. This boy's father was a drunkard, who left all the burden of caring for the family to the mother, and who kept them all in poverty through his drunkenness. They had all to suffer, and to suffer in silence, for the father was a tyrant in his home, cruelly treating his wife and family. The little boy was used to poor food, and poor clothing, and poor fires, but just now as he was sitting thinking big tears began to drop, one after another, on the hearth, till at last his mother, hearing a stifled sob, looked round and said, "What ails you, Johnny?" "O, mother," he said, "what's the use of holidays, and what's the fun of Christmas time? I want to skate, but I have no money to buy skates. I want to go to the panorama that is to be in our Sunday school, but they say it will cost five cents, and, besides, I have not decent clothes to go with, and I don't like to have the boys laughing at me. I want some toys to play with, and the stores are crowded with them, but there is no one to give me presents. They talk about Santa Claus, but I am sure he is a cheat, for he never comes our way. The boys who get their stockings filled on Christmas are those that have good fathers who love them. I heard the boys singing 'Christmas comes but once a year, and when it comes it brings good cheer,' but, mother, you know it only brings sorrow to us, for father is worse at Christmas and New Year than at any other time." When Johnny had got so far with his complaints he looked up at his mother, and he saw she was crying, so he stopped at once, for he could not bear to see his mother cry, and jumping up, he threw his arms round her neck and kissed her. Just at that moment the father came staggering in, gave Johnny a blow with his clenched fist that knocked the little fellow down, and threatened his wife with the same treatment if she did not give him at once all the money she had. When he had got her last cent he went away for more drink, and the poor wife picked up her boy and sat down with him in utter despair. She could not help murmuring the words of David, "Has God forgotten to be gracious, is His mercy clean gone forever more?" "Mother," whispered Johnny, "there is to be a sermon to children on Sunday, you might take me to hear it. I am sure we will find God has not forgotten us."

Now the Sunday, the first Sunday of the New Year, has come, and the people are hurrying to the church where this sermon to children is to be preached. One lady who was on her way noticed a poor little girl crouching on a doorstep, half starved with the cold, and looking as if it was long since she had enjoyed a good meal. The lady asked her how she came to be there on such a cold morning. The little girl answered, "My mother's gone away and left me, and I have nowhere to go." "What," said the lady, "have you no home, and no friends?" The little girl said, "No." "Well," said the lady, "come with me, and I will take care of you." So the lady took the little girl with her to the church, put her in her own seat, and told her to listen and she would hear about the friend of little children.

Well, the people were all in their places, and among the children there was Willie, who thought he could never be good, there was Maggie's friend, who was to tell her all the sermon, there was little Johnny, with his serious face, and the poor little girl who had no home and no friends.

Now, after the children had sung some hymns, and the minister had read and prayed, the sermon began, and we know some, at least, who were very eager to hear. The minister did not give out a text, but just began speaking sweetly to the children, and this was what he said:

"Dear children, I know you are all thinking about the New Year, and wondering if it will be different from the old one. I want to tell you that there is One here to-day Who says to us, 'Behold, I make all things new.' If you are the same as you were last year, if you have the same bad habits, the same bad temper, if you use the same bad words, and tell lies just as before, then this will be no New Year to you." (What a start Willie gave when he heard that, and he said to himself, "Father's been telling the minister about me," and he blushed right up to the eyes, but listened all the more eagerly as the minister went on). "If you are to have a New Year, you must have a new heart. As long as you have that bad heart you will be feeling wrong, and going wrong. So listen to-day to Jesus, who says, 'A new heart also will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you, and will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and give an

heart of flesh.'" (Willie put down his head for a moment, and said, "O Jesus, do that for me, do that for me.") But the minister went on, "Perhaps while we are here to-day there are some children so sick they cannot leave their beds, and they know that if they are to have their old cough, their old weakness, their old pain, there will be no new year for them (here Maggie's friend pricked up her ears and wondered if the minister knew about Maggie). Now, children, the doctor cannot promise you a year without sickness, and the doctor cannot take away every weakness. With God's blessing he may help you to get well, but if any disease has got hold of you he is very powerless. Jesus alone has power to make all things new. He can give you health and strength now if that is his will, but by and by He will change this body of weakness and fashion it like His own glorious body, according to the power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. The day is coming when you will be done with sickness—when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things have passed away. If you will trust yourself to Jesus he can raise you up from any sickness, and make all things new. ("O Jesus," whispered Maggie's friend, "make all things new to Maggie and me") Then the minister went on again. But there are perhaps some children here who have a very unhappy home, whose fathers are drunkards and who feel unless there is a great change comes over their fathers there can be no New Year for them. No; there will be the same struggle to get bread, the same dreads of the father's footsteps, the same rioting and cruelty. Oh, you should have seen little Johnny's face when the minister said this; he had been listening all along, but now he could hardly keep his seat. He gave his mother a push with his elbow, and turned to the minister a face that was old with anxiety, and it bore yet the marks of his father's cruel blow. "These fathers," the minister went on, "want new hearts—not temperance pledges. They have all signed pledges, but never kept them. These fathers want new bodies, for they have ruined their health by their drunkenness; but oh! the sorrowing mothers and the abused children want new homes. Listen. Jesus says, 'Behold I make all things new.' If a man gets a new heart and a new body we know he will soon have a new home for his wife and children, but if there should never be a new home here, Christ's word will not be broken, and to many a heart-broken mother and neglected child he is saying to-day, 'Let not your heart be troubled—in my Father's house are many many mansions.' (Little Johnny could not wait a moment, but putting his head down on the book board, he whispered, "O, Jesus, do it for father; do it now; give him a new heart and a new body, and mother and me a new home.") But once more the minister went on: "There may be some little child here who is alone in the world, who has neither father, nor mother, nor earthly friend; and if so, while that little child needs a new heart and a new body and a new home, she needs also a new friend—a true friend (the little girl the lady brought in with her quite trembled when she heard this, and wondered if the lady was the friend she needed); but the minister said "Jesus is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and when He says, 'Behold I make all things new,' He means that we should put our hands in His and trust Him to make good His word. O think of having a friend who can make all things new. Here the little girl boy; he had found out the secret of a happy prayer in a whisper, "O, Jesus, I have no friends—will you be my friend now and evermore?" And now the sermon is over, and the best of it all is that the prayers the children offered were heard and answered. Jesus never refused to hear a child that cried to him yet. Willie went home a new life, and his father had never any more trouble with him. Maggie heard all about the sermon from her friend and she cast herself upon Jesus for a new heart and a new body, and she is better now, but needs to take great care. However she is not anxious about her health as she used to be because she knows that by and by she will have a body that cannot know pain or sickness and a happy eternity in God's presence, where there is fulness of joy.

Ah, you want to know about little Johnny. Well, he and his mother went home greatly comforted, but what was their surprise to find the father lying groaning on his bed in great pain. He had met with a terrible accident that had quite sobered him and would

keep him in bed for many a day. Johnny nursed his father all the time of his illness and told him all the sermon when he was able to hear it, and the poor man wept like a child, and would not be comforted, so sorry was he for his sin; but Johnny read to him about the Saviour who is able to save to the very uttermost, and Johnny's father got a new heart and a new body, and very soon they moved into a new house, and a happier home is not to be found in all the city. The other little girl grew up under the care of that kind lady and determined to give her life to finding out the friendless and telling them of Jesus and His love.

Now, children, will you come to Jesus, who can make all things new and give you a bright New Year.

CONCERNING BAPTISM.—XI.

BY REV. W. A. M'KAY, B.A., WOODSTOCK, AUTHOR OF "IMMERSION A ROMISH INVENTION."

From the Christian Standard.

MR. EDITOR,—The editor of the "Standard" blunders seriously, in company with many other advocates of immersion, when he insists (issue April 8) that sprinkling or pouring is too feeble to represent a thorough change of the soul, and that only the immersion of the whole body can do so. For let us look again at circumcision. The change from "uncircumcision of the heart and ears" (Acts vii. 51) to the "circumcision of the heart" (Rom. ii. 28, 29), "the circumcision made without hands" (Col. ii. 11) was just as thorough—just as complete and pervading—just as overpowering, as that effected in the soul when we are baptized into one body by one Spirit. I suppose if the editor of the "Standard" had been in Abraham's place, and had received the command to circumcise Isaac (Gen. xxi. 4)—knowing the spiritual import of the rite as taught by prophets and apostles in the passages already quoted, he would have proceeded in consequence to *slay the child alive*. He would have gravely and severely replied to any objector, who should have hinted that cutting off a "little flesh" was all that was required, that the word "circumcise" means to "cut around," and the rite symbolized the complete pervading change of the whole spiritual nature, and therefore the cutting off of a little flesh was "too feeble" to represent this complete change, the "whole body" must be cut all around, and all the skin taken off!! This would be just as legitimate reasoning as when he tells us that sprinkling and pouring are "too feeble" to symbolize a thorough change of heart.

But God appointed the "cutting off" of a little flesh as a symbol or sign of the internal "cutting off" of the whole natural man—"the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Col. ii. 11). A little was sufficient because approved by the Lord. So after all bloody rites ceased with the sacrifice of Christ, the Lord appoints the "sprinkling of clean water" as a sign or symbol of the thorough change effected in man when he is baptized by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 13).

The editor of the "Standard" imagines that because the change symbolized in baptism is so great, therefore "much" and not a "little" water should be used. But if he will examine his Bible he will find that God has constructed all symbols of His Church on a different principle. The divine rule of symbols may be thus stated: *Whenever a great spiritual truth is symbolized by a material thing, only a small quantity of the material is used, in order that the spiritual truth may be held vividly before the mind and heart.* We have already seen the application of this principle in the symbolic rite of circumcision. Look at the same principle observed in the Lord's Supper. In that ordinance there is a great spiritual truth presented to us, viz.: Christ in all the fullness and freeness of His atonement. And yet this truth, inconceivably great, is exhibited by a little bread and sip of wine. On the editor's principle of a little being "too feeble" to express what is very great, we should take much of the bread and wine. This was the error of the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 22, 34). They ate much bread and drank much wine at the Supper. But Paul corrected them, just as we have to correct our brethren of the "much water" persuasion to-day. If we ate and drank much in the supper our minds would be turned to the outward material signs rather than to the great spiritual truth signified.

It is just so in the other sacrament—that of baptism. The precious truth symbolized is the changed condi-