

delayed messages in his hand.

"Why run so hard?" asked a previous messenger who was loitering on the road.

The runner waved his gun in reply, and, pressing on, was soon out of sight.

A band of the enemy saw him coming, as they sat at ease snoking on their mats. "I'll knock him over!" said one.

"I advise you to beware of attacking him, for he is armed to the teeth," said a comrade.

By this time the messenger had come up with them. "I am no foe," he cried, throwing down his Message of Peace.

And soon they found, when they had read the message, that this was quite true. "If only we had seen this message before, we need never have been enemies to your chief," they cried, welcoming the messenger right gladly.

Children, this story is a Missionary Parable, which we leave you to find out for yourselves. How many of you can rightly explain it?

### STORY OF THE MARTYRS.



HERE is a story of many years ago, of the early Church, in the latter days of the Julian persecution, when men had to give up something for Christ which they do not have to give up in these days, and that was their physical lives. An edict went out through the Roman armies that those who would not sacrifice to the Emperor as God should die, and it was left to each centurion how these men should be put to death. Away out on the Gallic coast the order went. There was a centurion there with a thousand men in his band; and when the order reached him he read it to them. Some sacrificed, but some refused. Those that refused were forty, but they stood strong and firm; they would not sacrifice; they would not pour out a libation, they would not light a fire except to Jesus Christ. How should they die? Far out before them stretched the cold lake. What death could be devised for them? The centurion gave his orders that out into the dark, cold lake, over the snow and ice, naked, the men should go to death. One by one they filed past him, twenty, thirty, forty men. And as they walked the cry uprose: "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, claim for Thee the victory, and from Thee the crown." And as they crossed the lake they sang: "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, claim for Thee the victory, and from Thee the crown." The centurion drew near the lake and watched them. Down on their knees they fell and prayed to Him who had led them and made them kings and priests before God. Cry aloud they might: glory well they might; those wrestlers wrestling for Christ. The hours rolled on and the night grew colder, and the snow fell, and still the song uprose: "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, claiming for Thee the victory, and from Thee the

crown." Not one faltered. Still the hours went on, and as the centurion stood and watched, there seemed to come a shadow over the snow nearer and nearer to shore up toward the hut. And in crawled a poor, half-frozen wretch willing to recant, willing to do anything for dear life. Still the cry kept on: "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, claim for Thee the victory, and from Thee the crown." They did not know that one of them had gone. The centurion looked down at the figure at his feet; he listened and he heard the sough and he threw aside his helmet, cast aside his cloak, and he too strode and fell down among them and cried aloud with them: "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, claim for thee the victory, and from Thee the crown." So again the number of the elect was accomplished, and of the souls that God had given Jesus Christ, he had not lost one!

### A GREAT MAN.

The following story is told of Mr. Gladstone:—

An old man used to sweep the street crossings for gratuitous pennies near the houses of parliament for many years. One day he was absent. Upon inquiry he was found by a missionary ill in a little attic chamber barely furnished with cot and stool.

"You are lonely here," the missionary said. "Has any one called upon you?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "several persons have called—Mr. Gladstone for one. He called and read to me."

"Mr. Gladstone called? And what did he read?"

"He sat on that stool there and read the Bible to me."

What a beautiful position! The greatest statesman in the world, sitting on a stool, in an attic, reading the Word of God to a street sweeper. Great men lose none of their greatness by kindness to God's poor.

MANY people have puzzled their heads to define faith, but it is a very simple thing after all. One of George Macdonald's characters explains it by saying, "When God tells ye to gang into the mirk, lassie—gang!" A Christian sailor, when asked why he remained so calm in a fearful storm, replied, "I am not sure that I can swim; but if I sink I shall only drop into the hollow of my Father's hand, for he holds all these waters there." A little Sunday school girl gave as her definition of faith: "It is doing as God tells you and asking no questions."

WHAT you keep by you you may change and mend, but words once spoken can never be recalled.—*Roscommon.*