

Going to Christ.

I am afraid your fondness for pleasure is keeping you from becoming a Christian. Remember what Christ says: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv, 33. In coming to Jesus the first thing to be settled is, not what pleasure you must forsake, but whether you will forsake any or all of them if Christ requires. Do you stand ready, as soon as you are shown that any pleasure, no matter what, is sinful, to forego it? This is the feeling which God demands.

The kind father finds his little child with her lap full of playthings. "Give me what you have in your lap," he says. The little one without a murmur surrenders all she has. The father examines the toys, hands back whatever is safe for her to have, but retains the broken glass, the sharp knife, and the poisonous paper. So you must yield up everything to God and leave it with him to decide what pleasures he will give you back again.

Holy Baptism—Why Baptize Infants.

Why not? Surely this is the real question.

The Bible is one book from beginning to end—given us by one Divine hand—telling us of one God, who is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.

The law and the gospel came from the same Lord, and there is a very close connection between them, for "The law was our school master to bring us unto Christ."

Holy baptism is the admission into the covenant of the gospel, just as circumcision was the admission into the covenant of the law; and no reason has ever been brought against infant baptism which would not bear as strongly against infant circumcision.

Infants cannot understand it.—Quite true. But could a little Jew understand circumcision at eight years old. Yet God commanded it. (Genesis xvii., 11-14).

The admission into the covenant of circumcision gave great blessing; they were no longer strangers, but became God's people.

But the covenants are different! Yes, that is true also; and just in that difference we may see how plain it is that infants should be baptized.

The covenant of the law was a covenant of works, "The man that doeth them shall live in them." By it no man living was justified. No man (Jesus our Lord only excepted) ever kept that covenant, yet the infant eight days old was to be admitted into it.

When Christ came he gave us a covenant of grace, "a new and better covenant," which tells of the washing away of sins, of pardon, peace and life eternal through faith in him.

Surely, if infants were to be admitted into a covenant of works there can be no reason to exclude them from a covenant of grace.

But again. A law not altered or repealed remains in force.

God commanded in old time that infants should be admitted into his covenant.

They that would shut them out must show their authority.

Our Lord never gave that authority. So far from it; when "they brought young children to Christ that he should touch them (and) his disciples rebuked those that brought them, he was much displeased, and (not only) said "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not (but added), for such is the kingdom of God."

Yes, little children were brought into that kingdom of God long before they understood the priceless blessings it conferred upon them.—They were the most fit of all to be brought into his kingdom on earth by baptism, for they were the type or figure of those most fitted for his kingdom in heaven.

But the baptism of infants is not mentioned in the New Testament! Is this true? Of course, in the first preaching of the gospel to Jews and idolaters, the converts would be converts, but when they and their households were baptized the children surely are included. And when it is said of the Philippian jailor he was baptized "he and all his straightway," the baptism of children is implied, and St. Paul distinctly claims for children

the blessings of the covenant "then were your children unclean, but now they are holy."

Oh, parents, let no negligence or want of faith, keep your children from the blessings God has given them in this covenant.

Bring them to your Father's house, and make them in holy baptism his dear children. Seek by his help to train them as God's children. Pray with them—pray for them, that they may be his forever. Then in the great day, in your Father's presence, you shall rejoice together.—S.P.C.K.

"Stretch it a Little."

Trudging along the slippery street
Two childish figures with aching feet,
And hands benumbed by the biting cold,
Were rudely jostled by young and old,
Hurrying homeward at close of day
Over the city's broad highway.

Nobody noticed nor seemed to care
For the little ragged shivering pair;
Nobody saw how close they crept
Into the warmth of each gas jet,
Which flung abroad its mellow light
From gay shop windows in the night.

"Come under my coat," said little Nell,
As tears ran down Joe's cheeks and fell
On her own thin fingers, stiff with cold.
"Taint very big, but I guess 'will hold
Both you and me, if I only try
To stretch it a little. So now don't cry."

The garment was small and tattered and thin
But Joe was lovingly folded in
Close to the heart of Nell, who knew
That stretching the coat for needs of two
Would double the warmth, and halve the pain
Of the cutting wind and the icy rain.

"Stretch it a little," O girls and boys,
In homes overflowing with comforts and joys;
See how far you can make them reach,
Your helpful deeds and your loving speech,
Your gifts of service and gifts of gold;
Let them stretch to households manifold.

—Harper's Young People.

England's Wealth.

Mr. Robert Giffen, the famous statistician, has read a paper before the Royal Statistical Society on the accumulated wealth of the kingdom. This amounted in round numbers in 1885 to ten billion pounds. This would give to each person in the kingdom a personal share amounting to £270. If the several countries were to be separated, England would be entitled to £308 a head, Scotland to £243, and Ireland to £93. Comparing the decade ended with 1885 with the two previous decades, ended in 1875 and 1865, Mr. Giffen finds that in every item and increase of capital marked the preceding decade, whereas the last decade shows numerous instances of a decrease owing to agricultural and industrial depression. Making a comparison of the richest three nations in the world, Mr. Giffen finds that the wealth per head of the population stands as follows:—Great Britain, £270; France, £190; United States £160.

Bishop Magee on Socialism.

The *London Standard* in a recent issue quotes Bishop Magee of Peterboro as follows: "Summing up a discussion on socialism, the Bishop said they must be careful, while knowing that many of the advocates of socialism held doctrines which were very dangerous, that they gave full credit to the nobility of motive and tenderness of sympathy with suffering and wrong which had stirred many of those persons. Christianity, however, made no claim to rearrange the economic relations of men in the State and in society, and he hoped he would be understood when he said plainly that it was his firm belief that any Christian State carrying out in all its relations the Sermon on the Mount could not exist for a week. It was perfectly clear that a state could not continue to exist upon what we commonly called Christian principles, and it was a mistake to attempt to turn Christ's kingdom into one of this world. To introduce the principles of Christianity into the laws of the State would lead to absolute intolerance. The law of Christianity was self-sacrifice, impelled by love; the principle of the State was justice impelled by force. The State had to do justice between man and man, and to

restrain violence; the duty of the Church was clear, namely, not to force Christian principles on the Statute book, but to inculcate in the minds of men, both capitalists and laborers alike, to do unto others as they would others should do unto them; to infuse into the minds of men the great principles of justice, to try to make labor just toward capital, and capital just and fair toward labor."

The force of this dictum lies in the fact that Bishop Magee is an acknowledged authority on the question whereof he speaks.

Directions for Worshippers.

Over the entrance to the little parish church at Hawarden, England, where Mr. Gladstone worships whenever he is at his country home, are inscribed these directions, which may be suggestive to others, as well as the humble parishioners for whom they were designated:—

"On your Way to Church.—On your way to the Lord's house, be thoughtful, be silent, or say but little, and that little good. Speak not of other men's faults: think of your own; for you are going to ask forgiveness. Never stay outside; go in at once; time spent outside should be precious.

"In Church.—Kneel down very humbly and pray. Spend the time that remains in prayers. Remember the awful presence into which you have come. Do not look about to discover who are coming in, nor for any other cause. It matters not to you what others are doing; attend to yourself. Fasten your thoughts firmly on the holy service; do not miss one word. This needs a severe struggle; You have no time for vain thoughts. The blessed Spirit will strengthen you if you persevere.

"After Church.—Remain kneeling and pray. Be silent. Speak to no one till you are outside; the church is God's house, even when prayer is over. Be quiet and thoughtful as you go through the churchyard.

"On your Way Home.—Be careful of your talk, or the world will soon slip back into your heart. Remember where you have been, and what you have done. Resolve and try to live a better life."

Truthfulness.

It is not the child's hold of its father's hand which keeps it safe through the dangerous ford, but the father's strong grasp of the child. The child has only to give itself up to its father's will, not choosing the places which it may think safer or easier to cross, but going unresistingly and trustfully as its father leads it, depending entirely on his wisdom and love, and listening from time to time for the strong and cheering tones of encouragement. Let us thus trust our heavenly Father; let us acknowledge that in His love and wisdom He has secret reasons for this discipline of suffering, reasons which are founded on the plan of eternity, and which are far beyond the limits of our finite understanding. Let us trust Him in the grand way in which St. Paul trusted when he said, "All things work together for good to them that love God."

A Parable.

I held in my hand a little dry tree, an infant hemlock. Had it lived a century it might have towered up above all the forest, and held up its head in majesty. But it grew on a sort of bog, and a muskrat, digging its hole under it, bit off its roots, and it was dead. It was full of limbs and knots and gnarls, and I felt curious to know how it happened that it was so.

"Poor fellow, if you had all those limbs and knots to support, I don't wonder you died."

"And my roots, which were my mouths with which to feed, all cut off, too."

"But where do all these ugly limbs come from?" said I.

"Just where all ugly things come from," said he. "I am pretty much like you men. Find out where my limbs come from, and you will find out where all human sins come from."

"I'll take you at your word, sir."

So I took out my knife and peeled off all the bark. But all the limbs and knots were left.

"You must go deeper than that, sir."