

### Childrens' Department.

#### THE LITTLE BOOTBLACK'S QUESTION.

One Monday morning not so very long ago the ministers in a certain Atlantic city met, as their custom was, to compare their Sunday's work.

"The most notable event with me," said Mr. M—" was the advent of Esq. Pond at our last evening's meeting. You all know him as our most prominent criminal lawyer and as an avowed unbeliever.—He listened very attentively to all that was said, and I felt that something had brought him to a consciousness that he had a heart. When I invited any one who had a burden to share it with the Christians present, he said:

"Yesterday morning, as I started for the station to take an early train, I paused near the depot at the stand of a bright-faced little bootblack whom I often patronize. As he finished shining the first boot he rested his hand upon his brush, and, looking very earnestly up into my face, said:

"Do you love God, sir?" "I had never been asked that question before, and, although I am not often puzzled, I was at that time having no idea what to say; but I managed to ask what difference that made to him.

"A good deal, sir," replied the little fellow. "If you love Him, you will be acquainted enough with Him to ask Him that He will find a decent tenement for mother and me. We will have to leave Long Alley some time the next week; the old hive where we live is to be torn down, and rent is high for a feller in my business, and I am in a good deal of a fix, for I don't know what to do, granny is so lame that she can't do anything. Yesterday I heard a man, who was talking to another man while I was giving him a shine, saying that God would do anything for anybody that loved Him. I've thought about it all night, and I came out uncommon early this morning bent upon asking every one who stopped until I found some one who did love Him, and so dared to ask."

"You will have to wait for another customer," I said, "but don't give it up. Keep asking, for in a city with as many churches as there are here some one must love God."

"I gave the little fellow a dollar and made all haste for my train; but, although I sped swiftly away across the country, I was not able to get away from the child's strange question. I wondered why I did not love God; I had heard what he had done for me, and although I have the name of being an infidel, I have not given thought enough to such matters to claim even that title. I felt mortified that I did not know the Lord well enough to teach the little fellow the way to

go to Him for himself. The question, "Do you love God, sir?" would not let me sleep last night; it took me to church to-day and has brought me in here this evening. Can anything be done for me?"

"Strange, Strange!" said the minister who was sitting on the opposite side of the round table. "for I had an almost similar experience at my last evening's meeting, only mine was a young business man, and the question had stimulated him to seek and find."

"I had the bright faced little bootblack himself," said a grey haired domine, exultantly. "He came first on Saturday evening. A good brother had brought him in, who had found him weeping and quite discouraged because he could find no one who would admit that they loved God. The testimonies in the evening were evidently a delightful revelation to him. He came again last night with a clean face and hands and neatly combed hair. After listening for some time, he said, 'I think I have found it out—I believe I feel acquainted enough with God now to ask Him myself.' And he did so in the most touching and quaint little prayer of faith I ever listened to. The prayer was answered, too; for the lame grandmother was moved this morning to a better tenement, and the happy little bootblack declares his intention of telling his experience and asking his vuestion, 'Do you love God?' as part compensation for what has been done for him by the glorified Redeemer, whose great sacrifice even the poor little bootblack could understand."

#### DAISY LAMSON'S MONEY-BOX.

Daisy had a tin-box given her at Christmas, and she said she was going to use it for her missionary money. She said that the missionaries were to have a part of all the money she got. So every once in a while some money, a penny or a threepenny piece, and even once or twice a shilling, went into the box. It was to be kept closed for a year.

On Christmas night, a year after she had got the box, her father opened it for her and counted the money. There was five shillings and ninepence halfpenny, which was a good deal for a little girl to save who did not have much money given to her.

"Oh, I am so glad!" she said. "This will be my Christmas present to the heathen."

It made her happy to give, and she gave what was her own.

Will you not imitate her example? Give what is your own, and give gladly. K.

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