

LAPLANDER BABIES IN
CHURCH.

The Lapps are a very religious people. They go immense distances to church. Every missionary is sure of a large audience and an attentive one. He can hear a pin drop—that is, should he drop one himself; the congregation wouldn't make so much noise as that under any consideration.

Of course Lapp mothers, like Canadian mothers, have to face the question, "What shall I do with the baby?" They cannot let the noisy little creatures disturb the congregation (Lapp children make as much noise as any other children). What is to become of them, then?

The problem is solved in the following manner:

All the babies are *buried outside in the snow!* As soon as the family arrives at the little wooden church, and the reindeer is secured, father Lapp shovels a snug little bed in the snow, and mother Lapp wraps baby snugly in skins and deposits it therein. Then the snow is piled around it, and the parents go quietly into church.

Over twenty or thirty babies lie out there in the snow around the church like so many little parcels, and apparently the arrangement has been found to answer quite satisfactorily!

In this country we have the *babies* but not the *snow*. Canadian mothers cannot, therefore, follow the Lapland mother in the above interesting manner. But surely the zeal of these women should teach a lesson to many a mother who makes the baby serve as an excuse for her not attending the services of the Church.

God never intended a little child to be the cause of keeping a mother away from His Sanctuary. There are times when she must stay at home on baby's account, but I do not hesitate to say that on forty Sundays out of the fifty two she could worship God in His House of Prayer. *It is not the baby that keeps her at home all the time.*

I am acquainted with a woman who has not been inside the Church more than six times during the past twenty years, and her children have always served as excuses. That woman never, to my knowledge, found any difficulty in leaving the baby at home during the week. She would spend hours at neighbors' houses. But on Sunday there was a change for the worse. The baby was always sure to "take on," and she would have to stop at home to look after it. After the children grew to be big boys and girls, and the early excuse had to be given up, another was immediately found: She had to stay at home and let the children go to church; the house would not be safe if all went away. She was the martyr still.

What an excuse for a mother to offer to God at the last for this awful neglect of Him!

Instead of setting an example of zeal and love for God to her children, she makes them the cause of her neglecting Him altogether.

Women to whom God has extended the care of little ones, look to it that you don't hold them up as barriers between yourselves and your Heavenly Father.

Surely, if you are in earnest, some way might easily be devised by which you could come to church and have your own spiritual life