

but lighter, for consecrating some of their very little time and strength to his work. And then as to money, purse and credit were both held at the service of the poor sufferer—a ready, present gift, and a pledging of his business honor—"What-
 ever thou spendest more." Business men, "Go and do likewise." Farmers, "Go and do likewise." Humbler Christians, to your power at least, "Go and do likewise." It is Christ's word, not mine. Look at the Good Samaritan and the way he treated his neighbor, and "Go and do thou likewise." The cry for help comes from every corner of the world, and God is manifestly stirring up his people. Stir us up, O Lord, for we are asleep. A. R.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

The following, from the *New York Evangelist*, is too late for this year, but it is well to think it over and bear in mind for the next year.—Ed.

The puzzling question is distressing many an affectionate heart now-a-days. What shall I get for a Christmas present? Not, what shall I receive? What is somebody going to give me? But what can I think of that will be suitable for my husband or my wife, or that will please Charlie and Tom and Josie and Belle? They do not need anything. You know there is nothing pretty to be bought for men anyhow, and the girls have already plenty of jewelry and gloves and books and pictures and toilet cases and perfumery and trice-a-bric. The house is lumbered with fancy articles of every description, for we have been making birthday presents and New Year presents and Christmas presents these years and years. And now Christmas is coming again. What can we think of that would be nice? O such a bother!

I know of one household in which this perplexity has been happily disposed of for this year. In view of the calls of the Lord's great and blessed Gospel work at home and abroad, it has been mutually agreed in that family that the money which would ordinarily go to the purchase of presents, shall be devoted to missionary offerings. May not the same be done in other Christian families? Let the plan be fully understood and mutually agreed upon. There need be no suspicion of a lack of love or remembrance. Some simple token, or even a few kind words, may

give as much gladness at home on Christmas morning as costly presents would. And let the price of the expensive trinket go to cheer the heart of some toiling missionary, or to comfort some worn-out servant of the Lord in his old age and sickness.

In many and many a home it would be easy to save in this way five or ten to twenty-five dollars for holy and gladdening uses, without diminishing, nay, rather increasing, the happiness of the festive day. Try it, try it.

SMOKING.

(For the Maritime Presbyterian.)

The Rev. W. Haslam, an eminent Episcopal clergyman in England, speaks thus of the habit of smoking:

Smoking is an idle custom and too often enslaves its votaries, and even if it does not become a dominant habit it certainly teaches no lesson of self-denial. A Christian man needs not to seek relief in any such way. It is said to be very soothing when a man is in any trouble or anxiety. If so in this respect it may be said to be next door to the beer barrel or to the use of spirits. If one may soothe his feelings with this narcotic, another may stimulate them, when he is low and cheerless, with alcohol.

The Apostle James says, "Is any merry let him sing psalms." He does not say, "Is any afflicted or low let him smoke and drink." No, let him pray and depend upon God. Many a lesson which might be learned from God on our knees is let slip altogether because we think there is no harm in relieving ourselves by self-indulgence. The flesh is a monster which is never appeased, much less subdued, by gratification.

A fearful flood is reported from China. The Yellow river has again left its channel, and overflowed the province of Honan in northern China. An area of 7000 square miles was submerged. The Governor of Honan reports that nearly all the people in this area have been drowned, which is doubtless a gross exaggeration. Another account says that millions have been rendered homeless and are in a starving condition. Honan is the province of China where our church in the West intends opening up a mission during the present year. As has often been the case in the past the trouble and suffering may prepare the way for hearing with gladness of the Bread of Life.