

## Children's Department

## A Trial of Faith.

In Southern India there is a famous Mission, which has the name of Nazareth. In one of the villages in this Mission, called Kuttialakan, several people have lately been converted from heathenism. One of them is a man named Gurubatham, and this is what the native priest says about him:—He is one of the five hundred people who were baptized in 1889. He can read well, is fond of singing Christian songs, and is very regular in his attendance at church. Whether the catechist is present or not, this man never omits going to prayer at the usual times. Some five or six years ago his wife bore him a son, and then she died. Recently this little boy fell sick, and was at the point of death. The father sought a Christian doctor to give medicine, but none could be found, so he got a doctor who was not a Christian. This man gave medicine, but it had no effect, and the boy grew worse. Then the doctor said, "I have tried my best, but it is no use; there is something wanting. If that defect be remedied, then only the doctor's medicines will take effect." He did not say this to the father, but to the relatives, because he knew that the father would not listen to his proposals. Then they asked what it was that was wanting. He said, "The god whom this man formerly worshipped is now neglected and must be propitiated. This is what is wanting." The relatives were afraid to tell the father what the doctor said, so he went away, saying that he would return the next morning, and when he came the boy was very bad, and seemed about to die at once.

Then the doctor said to the relatives, "In the night I saw a vision. The former god came and said, 'This man has stopped the sacrifices which he used to make to me, therefore I am going to strike his son with one blow, and take him away.' I begged him not to do

so. Then the god said, 'Let him now pay me half a rupee, as he used to before.' But I said, 'He will not do so, as he has gone to another religion.' Then the god said, 'Well, you must get the money and spend it on an offering for me; the man can remain in that religion, but simply pay the offering through you.' Therefore now give the half rupee, and promise an oath to give it yearly, and I will recover the child of his sickness." The relatives, who were all heathens, agreed to this proposition of the doctor's, but the father was not in the house. They said, "Anything is better than that the child should die." Then the doctor brought the medicine and laid it there ready to give; the only thing lacking was for the father to take the oath to give the yearly offering to the god. The father soon came in and looked at the child, and when he saw that he was dying, and suffering great pain, he sat down full of grief.

At last one of them arose and said what they proposed, and a greater sadness fell upon the father than even that caused by the illness of his only son. After a little time he said, "Though my son die I will not agree to this." But the relatives became vehement in their demands, and said, "Which is the more important, half a rupee or your son's life? Therefore you must give the money, and save your child's life." Then the father got up to leave their company and to avoid this great temptation, but they seized him and said, "We will not let you go; say only one word, 'I promise.' We will pay this money." He said, "I will not promise, nor shall you give money to the god."

The doctor thinking it was a matter of money, said, "Give a quarter of a rupee only, and I will make it all right." As the father still refused, they brought a quarter rupee and forced it into his hand, and told him to give this to the doctor. Then he went into the house, where he had got a small church money-box; this he took and brought out before his relatives, and he stood up before them all and said, "The God whom I worship now is the one true God. It is in His hand to give my son's life." Having said this he prayed, "Jesus Christ, if it be thy will, Thou canst give life to my son. I will never offer to devils. This offering I make to Thee." So saying he put the offering into the box.

After this he commanded them to take away all the medicine prepared for his son and said, "I will have no such doctor in my house," and he drove him away. He also told his relatives not to speak to him about any heathen practices. Then the father sent for the catechist and they prayed together. Thus they did all through the night. In the morning they looked at the boy; his sickness was gone and he was sleeping peacefully. Then the father went to the church and returned thanks, and showed the people what great things God had done for him.

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No. 9.

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## A Lesson of Gratitude.

A gentleman making inquiries in Russia about the method of catching bears in that country, was told to entrap them; a pit was dug several feet deep, and after covering it over with turf, leaves, etc., some food was placed on the top. The bear, tempted by the bait, easily fell into the snare.

"But," he added, "if four or five happen to get in together, they will all get out again."

"How is this?" asked the gentleman.

"They form a sort of ladder by stepping on each other's shoulders, and thus make their escape."

"But how does the bottom one get out?"

"Ah! these bears, though not possessed of a mind and soul such as God has given us, feel gratitude; and they won't forget the one who has been the chief means of procuring their liberty. Scampering off, they fetch the branch of a tree, which they let down to their brother, enabling him to join them in the freedom in which they rejoice."

Sensible bears, we should say, are better than some people that we hear about, who never help anybody but themselves.

## God's Ownership.

When the Scriptures and reason speak of God's ownership in us, they use the word in no accommodated sense. It means all that it can mean in a court of law. It means that God has a right to the service of His own. It means that, since our possessions are His property, they should be used in His service—not a fraction of them, but the whole. When the lord returned from the far country, to reach his servants to whom he had entrusted his goods, he demanded not simply a small portion of the increase, but held his servants accountable for both principal and interest—"mine own with usury." Every dollar that belongs to God must serve Him. And it is not enough

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that we make a good use of our means. We are under exactly the same obligations to make the best of our money that we are able to make good use of it; and to make any use of it than the best is a maladministration of trust. Here, then, is the principle always applicable, that of our entire possessions, every dollar, every cent, is to be employed in the way that it will best honor God.

## One by One.

A few days ago I was spending a day in the country with some friends who had two little girls, the elder of whom was only three years and four months old.

The family had recently moved into the neighborhood, and finding that the garden attached to their house was in a sadly neglected state, the father