



ADORATION OF THE WISE MEN.

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WHEN the lowly shepherds had returned to their flocks after worshipping the Saviour, we read of Simeon's prayer as he beheld the Child in his arms in the temple. To-day we are hearing about the visit of the wise men who came from the far East, perhaps from Persia. They brought with them rich gums and spices and laid them before the little Babe, and then they, too, knelt down and worshipped him. The birth of this Child was the glad tidings of great joy to the poor, ignorant shepherds, to the just and devout Simeon and to the wise and rich men from the East. And this has been the great good news to old and young, to rich and poor through all the ages since that day. Shall we not come and worship Jesus, bringing our gifts? Do you think you have nothing to bring? What is it Christ most wants? Does he not say, "My son, give me thine heart"?

## FOR HIS KITTEN'S SAKE.

A LITTLE boy was recently brought before the London magistrates, charged with stealing flowers from a gentleman's garden. When asked by the magistrate why he took the flowers, he burst into crying and said, "My kitten died, and I buried it, and I wanted to put a flower on its grave;" and he put up his hand before his face and continued crying.

He was a little, hungry child, not quite eight, who had chanced to find a stray kitten, and had loved it, and taken it to his heart and home; but, for all his love, it died. They never had any milk at his home, and the kitten could not eat; it was too young to do more than lap milk out of a saucer; but, having no milk himself, he could not give it any. Perhaps he did not know the ways of young kittens. He would fain have feasted his little guest. The bread which he had to eat he gladly

shared with it, he put crumbs of it to its mouth, but it did not eat them, he offered it a little tea, but it did not drink it. It could partake of neither bread nor tea, and it died; and he wept grievously, and buried it. He had seen people put wreaths of flowers on the graves in the churchyard. They were put there by those who wept over them; and in his grief for his dead kitten he reached through the palisades of a garden and broke off two sprays of white geraniums, and carried them to his dead little treasure's grave. Without any knowledge of this story, the rich and pampered owner of the flowers gave him in charge to the police, and he was put in the lockup to await his hearing when the magistrates sat.

That boy's heart was far nearer the kingdom of heaven at that kitten's grave, reverently, tenderly, lovingly laying its poor dead body to rest, than were those people who could laugh in the house of Jairus, while his dead daughter lay there. Read Luke 8. 40-42, 49-56.

Death God counts an "enemy." He will one day destroy death, and there shall be no more death. Then his "last enemy" and ours "will be destroyed." That is enough to make every godlike heart, by the instinct in it, still and sad in its presence. To have laughed even at that little boy's reverence for his poor little dead thing would be impossible to a godlike man. To the little man the enmity—the stern enmity—of death, and the hard things it had done to his beloved little companion, were real. And the magistrates were not hard. "You are a good little boy. You may go home," they said; "but when you want a flower again, ask for it; that will be better."

## PARROTS.

DON'T you think parrots or cockatoos are the most interesting pets one can have, except dogs and cats?

It is always a surprise to hear a bird talk; and some parrots talk so well, and learn so many things, that it is most amusing to listen to them.



THE WONDERFUL STAR.

You know that they are great mimics, and whistle, laugh and talk just like people, bark and whine like dogs, mew like cats and cluck like hens. In fact, they can do almost anything except sing like our song-birds, that is too much for them. Their own natural voice is harsh, and their song is a disagreeable scream.

How strange it would seem to travel through a forest full of these bright-coloured, noisy, screaming birds! There are none in our woods. We would have to travel a long distance to see them in their native haunts. There are parrots in Asia, Africa, Australia, and South America, but none in Europe and North America. Many years ago, sailors used to bring these wonderful birds over with them on their return from long sailing voyages to the land of sunshine where no snow ever fell, and ice is unknown. Sailors used not to be very careful to keep the third commandment, and so the poor birds learned to swear dreadfully, which shocked the good people at home very much. The birds were not to blame any more than little sister or brother is when you say naughty word, and sister or brother learns them from you.

Parrots and children only repeat what they hear. If they hear only sweet, kind words, they will repeat only sweet, kind words. If you speak sharply, angrily, and rudely, they will imitate your very tone as well as your words. That is why children are so often called little parrots.

## DENY YOURSELF.

LITTLE Christians, as well as big ones, have to learn to deny self. The heathen in Japan have a god which they call "the great bright god of self-restraint." Would you like to know how they worship him? If they want something that costs a dollar, they buy a little cheap article and put away the money that is saved. If they want some nice fruit or candy, they only buy half as much as they would like, or even none at all, and put the money in their savings box. At the end of the year they open the box and give the money to the poor. If the heathen can deny themselves for the sake of a false god, what ought Christians to do for the sake of Jesus, who gave his own life for us?