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of our Allies—which, let us remember, was not possible in a short contest and by an easy victory. At whatever cost, may the prince of this world be cast out.

And the world's salvation achieved: which can only be through the lifting up of Christ crucified

so as to draw all men unto Him, and bring in all over the world the Kingdom of righteousness and peace and holy joy, when every knee shall bow to the King of Love, every heart be loyal to the Prince of Peace, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

NOVEMBER.

Jewels in the Mud.

'Can the rush grow without mire?'—Job 8¹¹.

1. A GREAT artist and writer was one day walking in the outskirts of a manufacturing town. It had been dirty, rainy weather, and it occurred to him to take an ounce or two of the black slime from the footpath, and have it analysed. This mud or slime was found to consist of sand, clay, soot, and water. Pondering over the matter, he remembered that it is from such common things that precious stones are formed. It would make a long story to tell the process. You know, of course, that with the help of fire, clay can be made into the finest porcelain. But better still, if the clay is purified and left to itself for a very long time it may form into that lovely blue precious stone called the Sapphire. Then—can you believe it? from the sand we get the opal. Most of you must have seen one, perhaps in a ring of mother's which she values very much, and you wondered how such lovely colours came to be reflected in it.

One day you may read the artist's books—I hope you will—and find out how the opal is formed. From the soot we get the diamond. And last of all the water purified is the same which as a dewdrop sparkled in the heart of a rose. So in wading through mud that morning Ruskin—he was the artist I spoke of—was really 'splashing amongst jewels.'

The mud preaches a sermon to us. It tells us not only that things may be much better than they seem, but that even in the poorest beggar there may be the soul of a great man. Not so very long ago a very poor looking man used to sell news-

papers and matches at a London street corner. Little did the passers-by think that they were paying their pennies to one of the greatest of our poets.

2. But the mud that boys and girls know best is a very commonplace sort of thing, especially when it comes to be the month of November. They never think of jewels in connexion with it. Indeed, they often say that they just hate it. I have known people, however, who thought mud was something to be thankful for. 'Tak' me in among the dubs, they're soft and kindly; the hard road hurts me,' an old Scotswoman said to her daughter who was wheeling her in a bath-chair. Then there are cottages in the country, some of them very warm and happy homes, that are nearly altogether built of mud. At one of her mission stations in Africa, Mary Slessor not only had mud mission buildings, but her own little dwelling-house was an erection of wattle and mud. Much of her furniture too was made from mud; she had a mud sofa where she rested, and a mud seat near the fireplace where the person who cooked for her could sit. And who does not know the wonderful little one-roomed houses that we should never see but for the mud? Where would the swallow be without the where-withal to build her nest?

3. But mud can be something else than kindly. You have heard how the mud of Flanders has made our soldier lads suffer. If Ruskin were alive and had walked through a trench I doubt if he would have thought of it as 'jingling with jewels,' for he hated ugly things. But I read these two lines somewhere just the other day:

Two women looked through their prison bars;
The one saw mud, the other saw stars.

And it may have been left to the 'Tommies' to find jewels amongst the terrible mud of the trenches.

What sort of jewels come within their reach do you think? Not the sapphire, or the opal, or the diamond, but the jewels which are, in the sight of God, of great price. Patience and courage; you can understand how wonderful specimens of these have been found in Flanders. Love is there too, in a rough uncut condition perhaps, but it is the genuine article nevertheless.

There are many kinds of sorrow
 In this world of love and hate,
 But there is no sterner sorrow,
 Than a soldier for his mate.

Why have our lads gone to fight? Because they love their country. There are fathers there too who are fighting that the world may be a better place for you boys and girls.

'John Delaney of the Rifles'—who was he?

A name seen on a list,
 All unknown and all unmissed.
 What to us that he is dead? . . .
 Yet he died for you and me.

You sing hymns that speak of crowns. They are not, of course, gold crowns like the one our King wears, nor are the jewels in them like those you see in the jewellers' windows. God will see the rough uncut jewels that He values in the crowns of many soldiers. You surely would not like to face them without having even a single jewel in yours!

'Can the rush grow without mire?' The text is from the Book of Job, the eighth chapter, and the eleventh verse. Job was a man who had a very hard time. Not only did he have everything taken from him, but he was smitten with a loathsome disease. It was so loathsome that people avoided him: even his wife said, 'Give up God, and die.' At last he went and sat down on an ash heap all by himself. He felt very lonely and miserable. Then friends came. They are spoken of as Job's 'comforters,' but poor comfort they gave him. One, Bildad, told him that his trouble had come upon him because he had done wrong. The misery—the mud—was necessary. 'Can the rush grow without mire?' Job needed the experience. Bildad was clever, but clever men often make mistakes. Here he was lecturing a man who was gathering jewels from the mire and the ashes all the time. You have heard of Job's patience, haven't you?

Where do you find mud? Answer that question to yourself. I see a little boy pass my window every morning. He delivers papers. Another rings the bell and leaves the milk-can on the doorstep. They both look quite happy. You may not have work like theirs to do, but are there never days at school and at home when you want to say 'Ugh!'

Your fathers and mothers know that there is a meaning in having to wade through mud. It makes men and women brave and strong. It makes them patient too. We all—like the rush by the river—need the mud. Don't complain about it; where mud is, there is more than a mere chance of finding jewels.

II.

Living Letters.

'Ye are an epistle of Christ.'—2 Co 3³.

What is an epistle? An epistle is just a letter. St. Paul is writing to the Christians at Corinth, and he tells them that they are letters of Christ.

Now that seems a strange thing to say, does it not? I wonder what Paul means by it. What does it mean to be a letter of Christ? And how does Christ write His letters?

Well, when Jesus was on earth we never hear of His writing any letters. Only once do we hear of His writing at all, and that time He wrote on the ground. St. Paul wrote a number of letters. He wrote epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians and others; he wrote two long letters to his friend Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon.

So far as we know Jesus never wrote any letters of that kind. And yet He was always writing letters. Every day He was writing them, and some of the letters He wrote carried His message into far distant lands. And the wonderful bit of it was that Jesus did not stop writing His letters when He left the world. He went on writing them, and He is still writing them every day.

How does Jesus write His letters? He writes them on the hearts of men and women, and boys and girls. When He wants to let the world know something about Himself, He takes a boy or a girl and He writes a little bit of Himself on them and then He sends them out to the world; and if they are faithful letters, if they are brave, and true, and honourable, and kind, then the world knows a little more of what Christ is like.

Now Jesus is still in need of letters. He can never have too many of them. And He wants to write on you and on me. Don't you think it is a tremendous honour to be a letter of Christ? If Jesus came into this church to-day and chose you to run a message for Him, wouldn't you feel proud and glad? Well, Jesus *is* here though you cannot see Him, and He wants to send a special message by you to the world. I don't know what that message is, but I know nobody can take it quite so well as you.

There are three things I would like you to remember.

1. The first is that if we are not allowing Jesus to write on us, we are letting other things write on us. We can't stay just blank sheets of paper. Satan is always busy dipping his pen in the ink. If we are not allowing Jesus to write on us, then we are letting sin, or care, or the love of pleasure, or self, or money write their message. And their writing is not beautiful. Jesus' writing is always beautiful, but the writing of these things is black and ugly.

2. And the second thing I want you to remember is that Jesus can't write on us unless we let Him. He has many beautiful things to tell us and to tell by us, but we must be willing to be His letters. We must give Him permission to write on us.

3. Lastly, if we become Jesus' letters we must take care not to allow the writing to get blurred.

In the libraries of Europe are wonderful old parchments called palimpsests. These parchments have had a strange history. Originally they were covered with writing of great value—portions of the Old and New Testament or fragments from the works of famous Latin and Greek authors. But in the Middle Ages parchment became very scarce, and the monks, not realizing the value of these old manuscripts, took the parchments and washed or scraped off the writing. Then they covered them with their own writings—legends and treatises of little value. And these wonderful manuscripts would have remained lost to the world if modern scholars had not guessed what was hidden underneath the writing of the monks. Perhaps they saw a word here and there that had been imperfectly erased, and they treated the parchments with acids so that the original writing was brought out again—faintly perhaps, but still so that it might be read after a fashion.

There are some of Christ's letters that are just

like these palimpsests. They have covered up His writing with their own foolish scrawls and mistakes. They have become so cross, or so unkind, or so selfish, that other people find it very difficult to recognize in them the hand-writing of Jesus. But we need never be like that. The best way to prevent it is to take our letters to Jesus every day and ask Him to renew the writing. Then the characters will always be fresh and clear, and wherever we go the world will be able to read the beautiful message of Jesus.

III.

Money-Boxes.

'Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it.'—2 Kings 12⁹.

Did you know that a money-box was mentioned in the Bible?—one with a hole in the lid too. You will find all about it in the twelfth chapter of the Second Book of Kings. If you look at the ninth verse you will see that 'Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord.' The chest with the hole in the lid was a kind of collection plate. It stood in the Temple, and the people gave the priests their offerings to put into it. When it was full it was carried away to the palace of the king himself, and the high priest and the king's chancellor opened it there, and counted the offerings in the chest, and tied them up in bags. Then they used the money to pay for repairing and beautifying the Temple, which at that time was sadly in need of repair.

Now, our text makes us think of money-boxes and savings-banks, and I want to talk to you about them for a little while this morning. If you come to think of it, there are just three things you can do with your money.

1. The first thing is—spend it. That is the shortest way to dispose of it. You keep it only long enough to see whether it is a penny or a sixpence, and then you fly along to the nearest shop and buy something with it, and you don't see that penny or that sixpence any more.

2. The second thing is—save it. You put the penny or the sixpence into your savings-bank. At first sight this does not seem at all a nice way to

dispose of your money. In fact you grudge hiding it away in a box, and you drop it very slowly into the hole, especially if the box is one that needs to be broken before you can get the money out again. Putting the money in there makes it feel so safe. Yes, but then it is safe, and you look forward to the day when you will see it once more. And as the bank grows heavier you begin to be keener on adding to its store, and you grow rather proud of it, and try to count up how much there is inside. It is quite easy to remember that one half-crown and those three shillings, but the sixpences are rather difficult, and when you come to the pennies you get dreadfully mixed and give it up.

At last the glorious day arrives when the box is to be opened. Father or mother does it for you; and as you watch the coins tumbling in a heap on the table, and as you pile them up each after its kind till the penny pile threatens to topple over, you feel it has been worth denying yourself all those little things you might have bought, for now you will be able to buy something of real value.

If you haven't got a savings-bank already, start one as soon as you can. It is a grand habit to be able to deny yourself to-day for the sake of to-morrow. Of course I don't ask you to drop in every penny and every sixpence. I don't wish you to grow greedy of money or mean in spending it. That would be ten times worse than spending your money foolishly.

3. But there is a third thing you can do with your money, and it is better than spending it or saving it. You can put it in God's bank. What! Has God a savings-bank? Certainly He has. And every penny you give away to others goes straight into it. By giving it away you are not losing it, you are just giving it to God to keep. That sounds wonderful; but it is true. It is a splendid thing to have a savings-bank on the dining-room mantelpiece, but it is far more splendid to have a savings-bank in heaven. The money that we give to others from love or pity, we do not see again on earth, but God treasures it; and one day, when we go to live with Him He will tell us how much we have in His savings-bank. And won't we be ashamed, and try to hide our faces if the sum He mentions is very, very small?

But we must not run away with the idea that God despises small sums. You see He counts quite differently from us. Suppose you have only

a penny, and you are looking forward to spending it on something you specially want, and suppose you give it away instead of spending on yourself—you must not think that God will count that penny a sum too small to notice. Not a bit of it! He will count it as much as if you had had ten shillings and had given every one of the ten away. You see you gave what you could—your all.

But it is not money only that God wishes you to put in His bank. He wishes you to put in kind thoughts and loving deeds. All these count as coin in God's money-box. So if you come out of a sweet shop with a bag of sweets in your pocket and you see two little chaps outside gluing their noses against the pane and choosing what they would buy if they only had a penny, don't forget to give them a good half of your bag of sweets. That will be so much in God's bank.

Or if mother is looking tired out, and you have half an hour between lessons and bed-time, offer to run her errands or help her somehow. That will be dropping a sixpence in God's bank. You see there are hundreds of ways you can invest in it.

Let me tell you a story to finish. It is a really true story, and it happened not long ago.

On the outskirts of a certain great city there lived a little chap called Jimmie. His father was dead, but he had a mother, and a small brother named Bobbie, and a tiny baby sister. They were all very poor, so poor that Jimmie had often no shoes to cover his feet, and very little bread to fill his hungry mouth. By and by things grew worse, for his mother became ill, and could not work any longer. Then just when things were desperate something happened. An angel came to the house. At least she looked like an angel to Jimmie. She wore a grey cloak with sleeves like floating wings, and she had a bonnet with a long grey veil, and beneath the bonnet was a face—oh, so sweet! And she smiled at Jimmie and called him 'Old man.' She asked him if he knew the way to such and such a street in the city. Jimmie did. Then she told him that she had come to spend the afternoon with his mother, but that she wished to send a message to a certain house in that street. Would Jimmie take it? Of course Jimmie would. Then she took a look at Jimmie's bare red feet which he was rubbing one on the other to keep warm, and she drew sixpence out of her purse, and she said, 'It is a long road, and

you've no shoes, and there is snow on the ground, here's sixpence for you. Take the car!

Jimmie sped off like an arrow, and mounted the car steps, and paid his threepenny fare like a man, and wasn't he just proud? When he reached the street, he found the house and delivered the message, and then he started out for home. Now something was worrying Jimmie, and it was that neither Bobbie nor Baby was sharing his treat. He wanted them to have a good time too. Just then he passed in front of one of those shops where cakes and biscuits and toys and sweets are gloriously mixed in the window. And suddenly Jimmie knew what he should do. Said he to himself, 'I'll run all the way home, and may be it won't hurt so awful, and then Bobbie can have that penny whistle, and baby will get that penny ball, and there'll be a penny over to buy a ha'penny cake for each of them.' So he marched into the shop and bought the penny whistle, and the penny

ball, and the two ha'penny cakes. And the woman actually put the cakes in a bag, and he stowed away the toys in the only pocket of his that hadn't holes. Then he ran all the road home, and whenever he stopped to take breath he had a peep into the bag and a peep into his pocket to be sure the things were still there. And when he got home, very hot and breathless, and showed the angel in the bonnet what he had done, and hoped she wouldn't be angry, she only smiled all the sweeter and said, 'Dear laddie, no.' As for Bobbie and Baby! You should have seen them! That's all!

Now Jimmie invested that day in God's bank. He invested not only three pennies but a great deal of love. And that is what God wants even more than pennies.

Boys and girls, make up your mind to-day that however small, however empty your savings-bank on earth may be, your savings-bank in heaven will, please God, be both large and full.

'Christ Crucified' for the Thought and Life of To-day.

BY THE REV. A. E. GARVIE, D.D., PRINCIPAL OF NEW COLLEGE, LONDON.

I.

HISTORY is to-day challenging doctrine, its facts our faith. Many find it difficult to reconcile what they have hitherto believed with what they are now experiencing. There is one doctrine, one object of faith, which is likely to find confirmation, and not challenge in the calamity of to-day; and that is the tragic mystery of the Cross of Jesus Christ. It is an interesting coincidence that just at this time there should appear two works dealing with the doctrine of the Atonement, in which thinkers may find much help in making more intelligible to themselves the fact and the truth of salvation by sacrifice.

(i.) In no mere form of words, but in all sincerity we may express our gratitude to God that Dr. Denney left the lectures, which owing to his last illness he was prevented from delivering, ready for publication, for this is a very precious legacy. His book on *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*¹ can be placed alongside of Bushnell's, M'Leod Campbell's, and Dale's as a great

¹ Hodder & Stoughton, 1917. 7s. 6d.

contribution to the greatest of all subjects with which the Christian theologian can deal. If it does not contribute any new conception, it so expounds the conception adopted in the light of the knowledge and thought of to-day as to make that conception more intelligible and credible than it has ever been made before. As compared with his previous contributions on the same subject, it is a worthy consummation, in all respects excelling all he had hitherto accomplished.

(ii.) Principal Franks is to be congratulated on the conclusion of a task that has engaged him about twenty years, in the two volumes of *A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ in its Ecclesiastical Development*.² A work of this kind has been greatly needed, and it will be much appreciated, as the book is marked by adequacy and accuracy of treatment; and what makes it the more valuable is that while the author supplies the necessary connective exposition and criticism he keeps himself in the background, and allows the theologians

² Hodder & Stoughton, 1918. Two vols. 18s.