

Magnificent Descriptive Work.

When some twelve months or so ago a series of descriptive letters appeared in the Mail and Empire under the signature W. R. H., and it gradually became known that the initials were those of the Very Rev. Dean Harris, the idea got abroad and a hope was entertained that the writer might later give to the public a book embodying the letters. The idea and the hope are realized, and "Days and Nights in the Tropics" is the title of a work of two hundred and twenty-four pages, every one of which is brimful of interest, all highly descriptive, many magnificently so, and the whole a work unique in its kind as exhibiting a collection, which in all probability was never approached by any previous writer. The memory of the brilliant sermons and lectures delivered in former years easily prepares the mind of readers of Dean Harris' work for the explicit words and phrases, together with the many and apt classical allusions and references with which the book is filled. "Days and Nights in the Tropics" is a series of graphic pictures which, taken as a whole, cover thousands of miles of sea and

land, upon which the people of many and various nations live and breathe, and whose oft-times curious modes and customs have for the reader all the fascination of novelty. History, too, is benefited by the labors and researches of the Very Rev. Dean, as evidenced in the work, and the measure of pleasure the pages afford is always in just proportion to the reader's capacity for enjoying the beautiful in literature, and the perceptions of one who draws with a mastery touch. It is Joaquin Miller who sings of Columbus when "Behind him lay the grey Azores," but the same islands, when shown us by Dean Harris, are not grey, but rather a land where "the trees have all the tints of yellow as if the leaves were exposing the gold absorbed in summer" and where "the sky when the sun is declining, has the tint of bronze-dark orange and blue—and the transparent light of alabaster." The headings of the various chapters of the work give glimpses of the matter they contain. Here are some of them: Furnas and the Garden of the Gods; In the Azores, The Pearl of the Antilles; Martiniague and St. Pierre, The City of the Dead, Cathedral and Museum of Mexico, the Bull-fight in Mexico City, Land of Ghosts, March of Spaniards to Honduras, Copan—The Phantom City, From the Tower of Leon Cathedral. The chapter devoted to Martiniague and St. Pierre is in itself worth the cost of the book, the subject and its terrible fate being still a vivid and frightful memory in the minds of all readers; one short paragraph tersely tells us of the fatal spot when visited by the author of "Days and Nights in the Tropics." Here it is: "There were no ruins, nothing but a few feet of one of the cathedral towers and that of the Lycee were visible; everything—houses, fine residences, public buildings, convents and schools and thirty-three thousand human bodies lay buried for all time under sixty-five feet of volcanic dust." The story of what preceded the dreadful cataclysm is painful and awful, but the details graphically told by Dean Harris will live in memory forever. As a sample of descriptive paragraphs found on almost every page, the following selected almost at random, may be given: "Our path carried us through a wilderness of tropical vegetation, a riotous outpouring of primeval nature. Tall, cane-like manaque palms, forest nymphs, the russet and golden-headed melocromes, and the round-headed mango trees bowered the foot-hills. Higher up the face of the mountain was robed in exquisite ferns, delicate creepers and vines clinging in festoons to trunks and branches of giant sequoia whose bark is an excellent tonic and febrifuge, and a good substitute for quinine. On our right and left stretch-

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DOT'S PLAN.

(Dorothy Dana, in Sunday Companion.)

"Is grandma to have a present for 'Tismas'?" said little Dot, who was not quite five years of age. She could pronounce well nearly all the words she tried to use; but Christmas seemed a hard one.

"Course she is," said eight-year-old Dick, who thought he knew much more than little Dot. "All the family gets presents at Christmas, and grandma is the most 'portant one.'"

Dick liked to use large words and he was trying to use important. The day before he had heard that word used by his father.

"Is grandpa to have a present, too?" continued Dot.

"Course," answered Dick, "I'm 'be one of the family'?"

"Oh!" and away trudged little Dot to the corner where her dolls were sitting.

"All the family must have presents; then my family must have presents, too. That's the way nice people does. My! my! I must make a 'plan' like what Aunt Mary does when she has lots to do. Let me see, there's Eliza, my biggest doll, she must have a present. Jim, my black doll, must have a present. Daisy, my paper doll, must have a present. That's all—every one—Oh! I forgot."

Dot looked troubled at first; then her face cleared up, and clapping her hands, she said:

"Course, she's in the family. Bess, my black kitty, must have a present, and Fido, our dog. My! my! I must make a 'plan.'"

A few minutes later when Dot's mother entered the room, she found the little girl sitting on the floor with a large sheet of paper spread out on the carpet, a bottle of ink, and her father's fountain pen. There were not many drops of ink on the carpet, but there were some bed spots. On the paper were long lines, with here and there some cross lines.

"Margaret Hart, what are you

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doing?" said Mrs. Hart. Dot looked up in surprise, for when her mother called her by her right name, Margaret, there was always something serious going on.

"I see making a 'plan.'"

"Making a plan of what?"

"Why—just a plan for 'Tismas. I must do lots for my family," and she waved her hand toward the doll's corner. "Aunt Mary says she makes a plan when she has lots to do. I never, never see Aunt Mary's plan, but my papa's makes plans of houses."

By this time a faint smile began to appear on Mrs. Hart's face, as she realized the meaning of Dot's work. She waited for the little girl to tell her the meaning of the lines, and then said they would both make a "plan," but in a different way.

OBITUARY.

REV. A. GAGNON.

The Rev. Albert Gagnon, parish priest of Huntley West, died at Water Street Hospital, Ottawa, at the age of 85 years. Deceased was ordained in this city, then became vicar at St. Bridget's Church, and afterwards was named parish priest at Chantley. For the past two years he was parish priest at Huntley. R.I.P.

MR. ALEXANDER KELLY.

By the death of Mr. Alexander Kelly, which occurred at his late residence, on the 4th instant, another of the few remaining Irishmen of St. Stanislas parish has passed away. The late Mr. Kelly was of a quiet, amiable disposition, a devout member of the Catholic Church, and for nearly forty years a subscriber to the True Witness. His remains were laid to rest in the family plot at St. Stanislas beside those of his father, mother and brother. Deceased was 78 years of age and leaves a widow and an adopted daughter, who have the sympathy of all in their sad be-

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Virtue is like a precious stone—brilliant when plain set.

Vol. LV, No. THE MEA By THE YER Professor of CH

The season of Advent once more to its exaltation of Christian religion as in its adherents and reward in the past for whose comeliness were so long hope and expectation the Holy Church before us day by day lime thought, the Prophets, the acme of the ages of history, the experience. All the been converging upon at Bethlehem; all the sopher or critic ever or beautiful or desirable to take being and shield of that poor infinite skill the Church bring out the the average heart, the the average mind, the time of the birth of nothing in the tragedy or Shakespeare so grandly true and solemn, as the daily phases these weeks the Christmas meaning of the Old the Greek choragus the prophets and the own interpretation is all infinitely noble and significant, yet for it is the first time was so expounded that at once and the grasp its sense.

DRAMATIC NOTE SERVICE

As the splendid dr its solution, its many into ever fewer and broader. The sions, the extravagant the immemorial wrong of the world, all the and stiffness, and the treasury, the waywardness, fall away stage, and in their the central figure of Teacher and its Lawgiver, its Reconciler.

Out of the thousandments of this man st out three things,—the within the soul of man Strife within the bow and the Great Recon peace that was w Christ. Here is a trill Euripides, nay, worth rious Scraph, who al in fitting language thoughts that underlie our Redemption.

A DIVINE TEACHER GIVER

It is as a Teacher that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Father. of Himself He is often tells us. No himself, but is called than he. The Father sees, that the boy of was our own disordered darkened mind. Hum the way of righteousness and the spirit of holy moral transforming p gion, were greatly w say destroyed. And Wisdom came upon th der to rekindle in hum lamp of truth and in the power and the cour the truth. Before H come into the world m and for not a few, that their hearts were sorrow at the sight of Men of the West, like Plato, men of the East and Buddha, men of the tole, and men of peace and Numa—all had a way to better teaching or their own