

JANUARY 1, 1900

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

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"There's a lame giant in the town. He wants you."
"Does he?" said the dragon, showing his teeth.
"If only I were out of this!"
"If we let you loose you might manage to run away before he could catch you."
"Yes, I might," answered the dragon, "but then again I mightn't."
"Why, you'd never fight him?" said Tina.
"No," said the dragon, "I'm all for peace, I am. You let me out and you'll see."

So the children loosed the dragon, and he broke down the end of the dungeon and went out, only pausing at the forge door to get the blacksmith to rivet his wing. He met the lame giant at the gate of the town, and the giant banged on the dragon with his club as if he were banging an iron foundry, and the dragon behaved like a smelting works—all fire and smoke.

It was a fearful sight, and people watched it from a distance, falling off their legs with the shock of every bang, but always getting up to look again.

At last the dragon won, and the giant sneaked away across the marshes. The dragon, who was very tired, went home to sleep, announcing his intention of eating the town in the morning. He went back into his old dungeon because he was a stranger in the town, and did not know of any other respectable lodging. Then Tina and Johnnie went to the mayor and corporation and said: "The giant is settled. Please give us the thousand pounds reward." But the mayor said: "No, no, my boy. It is not you who have settled the giant, it is the dragon. I suppose you have chained him up again? When he comes to claim the reward he shall have it."

"He isn't chained up yet," said Johnnie. "Shall I send him to claim the reward?"

But the mayor said he need not trouble; and now he offered a thousand pounds to anyone who would get the dragon chained up again.

"I don't trust you," said Johnnie. "What did you do for my father when he chained up the dragon?"

But the people who were listening at the door interrupted, and said if Johnnie could fasten up the dragon again they would turn out the mayor and let Johnnie be mayor in his place. They had been dissatisfied with the mayor for some time, and thought they would like a change.

So Johnnie said, "Done," and off he went, hand-in-hand with Tina, and they called on all their little friends and said, "Will you help us to save the town?"

And all the children said, "Yes, of course we will. What fun!"

"Well, then," said Tina, "you must all bring your basins of bread and milk to the forge to-morrow at break-fast time."

All the children promised, and next morning Tina and Johnnie rolled the big washing tub down the winding stair.

"What's that noise?" asked the dragon.

"It's only a big giant breathing," said Tina; "he's gone by, now."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Quest.

There once was a restless boy
Who dwelt in a house by the sea,
Where the water danced for joy
And the winds were glad and free;
But he said, "Good mother, oh! let me go;
For the dullest place in the world, I know,
Is this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree."

"I will travel east and west;
The loveliest homes I'll see;
And when I have found the best,
Dear mother, I'll come for thee.
I'll come for thee in a year and a day,
And joyful then we'll haste away
From this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree."

So he travelled here and there,
But never content was he,
Though he saw in lands most fair
The costliest homes there be.
He something missed from the sea or sky,
Till he turned again with a wistful sigh,
To the little brown house,
The old brown house,
Under the apple tree.

Then the mother saw and smiled,
While her heart grew glad and free.
"Hast thou chosen a home, my child?
Ah, where shall we dwell?" quoth she.
And he said, "Sweet mother, from east to west,
The loveliest home, and the dearest and best,
Is a little brown house,
An old brown house,
Under an apple tree."

Our Coming Defenders.

"THE SOLDIERS THREE."

(With compliments to Mr. Rudyard Kipling.)

We'll be soldiers three—to the front we'll go
To fight our enemies—lay them low:
We'll fight like the bravest that ever was seen,
For Briton's glory and Briton's Queen.

REFRAIN:

March, my brothers,
Step out clean—
We're soldiers three,
And fight for the Queen!

We copy the words that big men talk—
But we've got to practise our soldier walk,
And keep in step to show we mean
To fight the battles of England's Queen.

Repeat refrain—March, my brothers, etc.

Keep step, little brother, learn to march,
Our steps must match. Now look out, Arch!
Just pull him along, and don't look green—
Remember we're soldiers, and fight for our Queen.

Repeat refrain—March, my brothers, etc.

L'ENVOI.

March on, young Canada, you're the stuff
To show our foes *when they've had enough!*
The Lion and her cubs (as ever has been)
Will fight for glory, and Briton's Queen.

FELIX.

THE QUIET HOUR.

A Happy New Year.

"Our other years have slipped away, as slips the flower its sheath.
Once more with hands held out we grasp a gift the Father sends.



OUR COMING DEFENDERS.

EDISON, ARCHIE AND LORNE MACQUARRIE, SAULT STE. MARIE, ONT.

And give Him thanks for length of days, for joy that comes
with breath,
For home and books and happy work, for children and for friends.

What yet may wait of care or grief to-day we cannot tell.
Another year, another start, another chance to do
What lieth closest to our hand: God loves us; all is well.
Disdaining fear, we greet the year, whose first white leaves
are new."

My dear friends—for we are friends, are we not?—do you think the writing of this Quiet Hour is a hard and wearisome task, or a pleasure and a privilege? This is not the Puzzle Department—we leave that to Uncle Tom's able management—but I don't intend to solve that problem for you, not just now, at all events. However, it is certainly a pleasure to-day to be able to reach out "the right hand of fellowship" to so many good Canadians; wishing you, each one, happiness and prosperity through the coming year. But happiness and prosperity are words, and words have whatever meaning we choose to give them. For instance, there are plenty of young lads in this country who fancy they would be perfectly happy out in South Africa. On the other hand, many men out there probably think happiness lies at home. Happiness is not found in having all earthly desires satisfied. Take Solomon for an example. He had wealth, fame, peace, wisdom, etc. Was he happy? Read the book of Ecclesiastes and see how empty and wearisome life appeared to him. Try the experiment on a child. Give it everything it asks for, and it will soon be discontented and spoiled.

And yet it is not true that "Man never is, but always to be, blest." It is quite possible to be really happy now. The secret of happiness is love, for love brings joy and peace in its train.

"Still in loving, still in loving,
More than being loved, is joy."

The word "happy" is very seldom used in the Bible, and is often rather startling when it is used. St. James says, "We count them happy which endure." St. Peter evidently agrees with him, for he says, "If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye." Then again, we read, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth."

In wishing you happiness during the coming year, I don't desire for you a life entirely free from troubles or difficulties. If you had no opportunity for exercising patience and endurance, you would soon cease to be "the backbone of the country." Isn't that the proper expression to use in describing farmers? You would lose your manly hardiness and become so limp and flabby that you could not stand against a storm yourself, much less support the weaker natures leaning upon you. Then take the word "prosperity." A farmer once found that his ground brought forth so plentifully that he had to pull down his barns and build greater, because he had no room to store his fruits and his goods. Surely he was a prosperous man? But wait! God calls him a fool. Why? Was it because he was rich? Abraham was rich, and he is called "the friend of God." Job was very rich, and God calls him "a perfect and an upright man." We are not left in doubt as to the justice of the title "Thou fool." His folly consisted in laying up treasure for himself instead of being rich towards God. He did not think riches were a means of doing good. He only thought of his own personal comfort, saying, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

That was plainly very selfish, but how was it foolish? You would think a man very foolish if he put all his money into a bank which was on the verge of failure. It might break any day, it was certain to break before many years were over, and then he would be utterly ruined. It would be especially foolish if another bank were at hand; one that paid splendid dividends, and could not possibly fail. Well, that is just what this man did. All his treasure was stored in this world. Death was certain to come before very long, and then he must step out into another life—a ruined man! God said to him, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," and he was bankrupt in a moment. All his hard-earned gains were snatched from him. Was he a prosperous man?

I do wish that your barns may not be big enough to hold your crops. God has promised that very kind of prosperity to those who obey the command, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." Are you doing that? Then listen: "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty." He has promised this very blessing to all who bring the tithes into His storehouse; saying, "I will open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Whether such a gift brings real prosperity or not depends

on the way it is accepted and used. If a rich man lays up all his treasure on the earth he is a fool, undoubtedly. If riches harden his heart and make him selfish, then it is well for him if God in His mercy take them away.

The prosperity of the soul is of far more consequence than that of the body, and should be more carefully attended to. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"—that is our part—"and all these things shall be added unto you"—that is God's part. If we do our share He will do His, never fear.

Treasure laid up on the earth is not very safe, even while we are here to look after it. Moth and rust may corrupt it, thieves may steal it, or it may cease to give any real pleasure and satisfaction. Treasure laid up in heaven is perfectly safe. Every act of kindness is stored up in God's treasury, and He is responsible for both capital and interest. It may be so small that it is entirely forgotten by both giver and receiver; but He never forgets, and the interest He pays is far beyond anything earthly in the way of investment. He promises a hundred per cent. interest, and He never breaks His word. Happiness and prosperity are obtained by giving, far more than by receiving, even in this life. Some of the interest is paid at once.

"Not in having, or receiving, but in giving is there bliss; He who has no other pleasure ever may rejoice in this. Be it health, or be it leisure, be it skill we have to give; Still, in spending life for others, Christians only really live. What, in love we yield to others, by a charm we still retain, For the loved one's acquisition is the lover's double gain."

With what kind of coin does God pay back what is lent to Him? I cannot answer that question. He has many kinds in His treasury. What kind of reward do you wish for most? Do you love Him so heartily that your greatest reward would be to hear