

THE SEA.

BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the steady ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

CHRISTMAS AT THE HOSPITAL
FOR SICK CHILDREN,
TORONTO.

BY L. J. H.

CHIRSTMAS and Santa Claus are inseparably connected in the minds of most children, whether sick or well. It is almost needless to say that the thirty-two patients at the Hospital for Sick Children were no exception to the general rule. For weeks, kind friends had been preparing pleasant surprises for the children, and though the Christmas tree still held suspended from its evergreen branches its precious fruitage until the Thursday following, Christmas-day itself was one of unmitigated pleasure and satisfaction. As soon as it was light in the wards, when the bright eyes of convalescents and the heavy, languid ones of ailing ones were unclosed, they rested upon a mysterious parcel lying upon the pillow of each little cot, which, when opened, was found to contain a pretty Christmas card, a small stocking of "goodies," and a real Christmas letter, the gift of the ladies of the Flower Mission. Parents and relatives were allowed the pleasure of giving in charge to the Matron their gifts, who placed them under the pillows of the loved ones when asleep, and for those who were friendless loving hands had prepared special gifts, so that no little heart would be disappointed on the birthday of Jesus our Saviour.

One band of Sabbath-school children in M——, another in O——, and many children in the city and from a distance, had sent toys and books from their own treasured stores, and these materially helped the Committee in arranging a gift for each one.

The Christmas dinner was an event. It was contributed, prepared and served by Miss B—— and a few of her young lady friends. For three successive years has Miss B—— visited the Hospital on Christmas morning, for the purpose of preparing and giving to the children a Christmas dinner. The well boys and girls, who read PLEASANT HOURS, will be glad to know that many of the patients were able to sit down at the tables spread in the wards, and but few were sufficiently ill to be denied the pleasure of partaking, at least sparingly, of the good cheer so kindly provided for them.

The afternoon was enlivened with games and sports, intermingled with many earnest little talks about the Babe born so many hundred years ago, who came to save us from sin, and who, when He grew to be a man, loved children, saying to them so tenderly, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

But, though Christmas had been so

pleasant, much anxiety was expressed for the quick arrival of Thursday. There were many nods and whisperings in quiet corners, and all hearts were full of anticipations concerning the mysterious tree and its strange fruit. At last the long-expected Thursday afternoon came, and all the preparations were complete. A little daughter of Mr. H—— personated the fairy sprite, whose pleasing duty it was to dispense the gifts, and as with fleet step (greatly accelerated by a pair of silver wings which sprung from her shoulders) she passed from bed to bed, untying with nimble fingers very suggestive-looking parcels, and was greeted with little shrieks of surprise and delight, the onlooker of mature years was reminded of days long since gone by. The Hospital Christmas tree was a wonderful one. Old St. Nicholas (in the person of Miss M——, the ever-kind friend of the children) had evidently been in a generous frame of mind when he drew rein at the Hospital door—perhaps he thought that he must in some way compensate these sufferers for days and nights of sleeplessness and pain, or perhaps the graceful fairy with silver wings, who distributed the gifts, possessed the power of transforming with her wondrous wand evergreen twigs into books, dolls, horses, balls, etc. At any rate, it seemed as though the tree would never be stripped of its delightful fruit, and each child received not one but many presents.

Generous children will gladly hear that several of these sick ones have already given to poor brothers and sisters at home, who through poverty or the vice of parents were without a Christmas gift, one or more from their full store.

The writer passed through the wards about an hour after the tree had been dismantled, and the tour was at once amusing and saddening. One convalescent boy was spinning three tops, all going at once, for three bed-ridden chaps, while a little girl of weak intellect was hugging tightly in her arms, and cooing softly to it, a big, blue-eyed dolly. Young B——, a stirring lad, had dexterously taken apart his jumping-jack that he might "find the jump," and in an adjoining bed another lad was preparing to follow his example and dissect his kaleidoscope, in order to "see what made the see." As we looked in at the door of the small girls' ward, we were surprised to find all dear little Maggie's presents untouched on the table, and the child lying quietly with her face to the wall; stooping over her with questioning look, the dark eyes were upturned for an instant, and to our mute appeal the quiet, patient answer came, "Only an azzor abscess." As we turned to go out, we met the good Matron, Miss F——, with a huge basket on her arm, gathering up the bags of candy, which were to be placed in the care of the nurses and dispensed daily, with a view to the physical state of each patient.

Little Janey, about whom you have heard, is still living, but gradually grows weaker and weaker; she is at home now with her parents. Archie, whom you also know, is well and hearty now. Sometimes death comes to the Hospital. A few weeks ago little Ettie was taken, but she was quite ready and willing to go, and we know that she is keeping a long, long, happy Christmas in the heavenly land, and that she will ever be with Jesus.

But we must not forget to mention

the gift which a sweet young girl in Nova Scotia sent to the Hospital before she died. She had read in PLEASANT HOURS about the Hospital for Sick Children, and the Crosby Home for Girls in the North-West, and, when dying, desired her mother to give all her little fortune—the sum of one hundred dollars—to these two institutions, fifty dollars to each. The ladies who have charge of the Hospital have decided to take some poor, neglected, sick child, and care for it with this precious gift, as this amount will keep a cot in the Hospital for at least six months.

And now we must close this little history, wishing all our readers a bright new year, and hoping that they may always have hearts full of tenderness and sympathy for those who are sick and afflicted. "I was sick, and ye visited me."

A poor little newboy, while attempting to jump from a city car the other afternoon, fell beneath the car and was fearfully mangled. As soon as he could speak he called piteously for his mother, and a messenger was sent to bring her to him. When the bereaved woman arrived, she hung over the dying boy in an agony of grief. "Mother," whispered he with a painful effort, "I sold four newspapers, and the money is in my pocket." With the hand of death upon his brow, the last thought of the suffering child was for the poor, hard-working mother, whose burdens he was striving to lighten when he lost his life.—*American Paper.*

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

A.D. 52.] LESSON VII. [Feb. 17.
THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER.

Acts 16. 25-40. Commit to memory vs. 29-34.
GOLDEN TEXT.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16. 31.

OUTLINE.

1. Songs in the Night, v. 25-28.
2. The Joy of Salvation, v. 29-34.
3. Out of Prison, v. 35-40.

TIME.—A.D. 52, directly following the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—Philippi in Macedonia.
EXPLANATIONS.—*At midnight*—While in prison and in the stocks, after being scourged. *Prayed*—Even in prison they were near God. *Sung praises*—Happy in their troubles because their Saviour was with them. *Earthquake*—This was God's answer to their prayers. *Bands were loosed*—By the chains being made loose from the wall. *Would have killed himself*—His own life being made the penalty if his prisoners escaped. *All there*—The prisoners were too frightened to escape. *Do to be saved*—Perhaps he had already heard Paul preach, and now saw his own danger. *Believe*—Trust for salvation. *Saved* from sin, its guilt and penalty. *Thy house*—Saved himself, he would show his family the way of salvation. *Baptized*—As a sign of his faith in Christ. *Set meat*—Any kind of food is meant. *Serjeants*—The under-officers. *Being Romans*—Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, and it was a crime to imprison or beat them without trial. *Fetch us out*—Bring us out honourably. *Departed*—Since they could do no more work in that city.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson are we taught that God gives—

1. Comfort in communion with him?
2. Safety in peril?
3. Salvation through faith in his name?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What happened while Paul and Silas were singing in the prison? There was a great earthquake. 2. What was the effect? All the doors were opened. 3. What did the

keeper of the prison ask Paul? "What must I do to be saved?" 4. What did Paul reply? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." 5. What did the magistrates do at day-break? They released them.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTIONS.—Salvation by faith.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

11. How does our Lord teach us His religion?
By His word and by His Spirit.
12. What is His word?
The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the sacred books of the Christian Faith.
13. How does the Old Testament teach Christianity?
The Scriptures of the Old Testament were written by many holy men, who prophesied that the Christ was coming, and foretold also what He would suffer and do and teach. 1 Peter i. 10, 11.

A.D. 52.] LESSON VIII. [Feb. 24.

THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS.

Acts 17. 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. The Devout Believers, v. 1-4.
2. The Envious Unbelievers, v. 5-9.
3. The Noble Bereans, v. 10-14.

TIME.—A.D. 52, immediately following the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—Thessalonica and Berea, both in Macedonia.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Synagogue*—A place where Jews met to worship. *Went in*—To the meeting on the Sabbath. *Scriptures*—The Old Testament from which Paul proved the truth of the Gospel. *Opening*—Showing from the Scriptures. *Alleging*—Declaring. *Consorted*—Because friends and companions. *Devout Greeks*—Gentiles who worshiped God. *Chief women*—Women of noble rank. *Level fellows*—Idle and worthless people. *Assaulted*—Made an attack with a mob. *House of Jason*—Where Paul was entertained. *Turned the world*—By the excitement of their preaching. But the fault was in the world, not in the Gospel. *Another king*—Our duties to Christ are never opposed to our duties to the State. *Taken security*—A pledge that they would not cause trouble or disturbance. *More noble*—Of a better spirit, more willing to learn the truth. *The word*—The truth as preached by Paul. *Whether these things were so*—They believed what they found taught in the Scriptures. *Honourable women*—Women of noble rank. *To go as it were*—This should read "as far as." *Abode there still*—To care for the Church.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where do we find in this lesson—

1. An example of the fruits of envy?
2. A model Bible student?
3. An example of brotherly love?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What did Paul declare to the Thessalonians? That Jesus was the Christ. 2. E. v many of the Greeks believed? A great multitude. 3. How did the Jews who believed not receive this preaching? "They set the city in an uproar." 4. How did those at Berea receive the word? "With all readiness of mind." 5. What did they do? "Searched the Scriptures daily."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of Scripture.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

14. What has our Lord said about the books of the Old Testament?
He calls them the Scriptures, says that they testify of Himself, and that they will not pass away. Luke xxiv. 44, 45. John x. 35. John v. 39. Matthew v. 17, 18.
15. Is this the reason why we believe the Old Testament?
There are many other reasons, but this is the chief reason. Our Lord honoured the Old Testament, and we must honour it, and receive it as the word of God.
16. How does the New Testament teach His religion?
It contains the history of His life and death, the record of His teaching while He was among men, and the doctrine which He taught the Apostles by His Spirit after He ascended into heaven.