

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 39

JANUARY, 1905

No. 1

The Child in the Midst.

BY CHAS. H. BATTEY.

A little child amongst them all
Looked wistful at the throng:
He heard the Saviour's gentle call
And felt the expectant silence fall
On voices rising strong.

A hand grasped his, a look bespoke
A child's calm wonderment,
And latent thoughts within him woke,
And silver sounds of being broke
The stillness of his heart's white tent.

He noted not what words were said,
Nor saw the eyes bent on him there,
That almost scorched his flaxen head,—
He only looked above and read
The one who had him in His care.

The crowd pressed round and heard
Him say,
"Who would be great must be as this,—
This little child who here to-day
I took from other boys at play:
Of such as these the Reign of Bliss."

Some shook their heads as doubting why
The Master fancied so a child;
Yonder the great High Priest went by,
A pious Pharisee drew nigh
With holy garments undefiled.

To play again the boy returned,
But wistful fancies backward cast;
His heart within him ever yearned,
And round about that day discerned
A glowing halo in the past.

No years might dim that sacred touch,
Like fire upon his flaxen head;
And time but cleared the words of much
Deep mystery; "Of such—of such
God's kingdom." Thus he said.

Until, a gray-haired man, he knew
The halo of that day within,
Nor passed the vision from his view,
True to the voice that spake him true,
He guileless lived, and saw not sin.

The Year's Best Gift.

The fire was bright; the night was drear,
We sat and praised the parting year.

One guest gave thanks for added wealth,
And one for quick return to health.

The aged father told with joy,
The coming of his absent boy.

"A glad some year!" the brother cried,
And smiled upon his rosy bride.

"Ah, yes!" the sister said, and pressed
Her infant closer to her breast.

"It was a glorious year, in truth,
I gained my 'sheepskin'!" cried the
youth.

The patient mother gently sighed,
And breathed the name of one who died;

Then softly said, "To her was given
The year's best gift, for she has heaven."