

## A STORY OF SANTA CLAUS.

'Twas Christmas Eve; the snow fell down  
In whirling eddies, borne around,  
Blown hither, thither, on the ground,  
Above, all o'er the festive town.  
With glee the rich man's children cried,  
"Oh, welcome snow! glad sport in store!"  
And watched the snow-storm from the door;  
"Hard winter!" many a poor heart sighed.

The children's hearts beat gay and light;  
Gathered around the Christmas tree,  
Or on a parent's loving knee;  
For Santa Claus would come to-night!  
And dainty hands with loving care  
Mid prattling of each childish tongue  
O'er downy pillows stockings hung,  
That Santa Claus might find them there.

Oh, light and shade! The artist hand  
Must mingle tints of every hue  
To paint a picture stern and true  
Then turn to sorrow's haunt thy gaze!  
A dim light o'er a garret thrown,  
A care-worn woman, who hath known  
That saddening dream called "better days."

Dragged down to drink-caused woes by him  
Whose vows of love her youth beguiled;  
A drunkard's wife, a drunkard's child  
Are doomed to want and penury grim.  
This night the mother's heart was wrung;  
She saw, by dim light, faintly shed,  
Oh, grief! beside her darling's bed  
A little empty stocking hung!

And she had naught to fill it left!  
No little toy, for childish treat;  
No golden orange, juicy, sweet,  
By him for drink, of all bereft!  
She slept that night, 'twas misery's sleep,  
Till Christmas carols, sweet and clear,  
Broke in the morning on her ear;  
Then she awoke to sigh and weep.

Her mother-heart gave one wild throb,  
She heard her darling's fingers grope  
Around the cot, in childish hope—  
Then came a silence, and a sob!  
It spoke of childish hopes all crushed,  
Of an awakening from a dream  
Bright with an almost fairy gleam,  
It told of joy's song, rudely hushed!

Much grief the mother's heart had known,  
Hunger and cold and untold woe;  
But ne'er such anguish did she know  
As wrung her heart that Christmas morn!  
And this she felt grief's greatest sting;  
Whate'er life's miseries, or its woes,  
None are so fierce, so dire as those,  
Man on his fellow-man doth bring!

Oh, loving-mother! tender wife,  
Whose hand upholds the wine-cup red,  
Yet seest no cause for future dread,  
Know this—that wine with woe is rife!  
He drank and fell, and thou dost blame;  
Hath not the cup the selfsame sting?  
When thou thy stone at him doth fling,  
Remember! Thine may do the same!  
—Harriet A. Glazebrook.

## ANECDOTES BY MR. JOSIAH NIX.

The following extracts are from a speech by Mr. Nix of the London Wesleyan Mission, at the Annual Meeting of the National Temperance League, held at Exeter Hall, on May 8:

## GOOSE CLUB NEW RELIGION.

"The place where I work mostly is in Wardour Hall, in Soho. We had not been there many weeks before the publican put out a very large bill stating, 'Our annual goose club has commenced.' I thought 'What is that for? That must be to get the working man's money; and if the publican can get the working man's money with a goose club, why should not the teetotalers?' I had a large bill printed at once—one a little better looking than the publican's—and I put it up announcing that our annual goose club would commence on a certain day. I made inquiries in the neighborhood of a man who knew all about it. In nine weeks the people in that slum paid into my hands no less a sum than £93 18s. Most of that money would have gone into the publican's till, but it came into the hands of temperance reformers; and, instead of handing the people back their money, because I thought that perhaps they might then spend it in drink, I said, 'We will spend the money for you. If you will come on a certain night, and give your orders for whatever you want, we will purchase the things for you.' We purchased 1,324 articles, and the purchases gave satisfaction. The publicans became angry; they were very much annoyed.

They said: 'This is a new religion.' The old religion I found they had profound respect for—the religion of going to church once a week. They seemed to admire that very much, but this new religion of a goose club—they could not understand it, and they made up their minds that they must do something if they wished to keep level with the new religion."

## COLD WATER FROM A PUBLICAN.

"One Sunday, two or three weeks after Christmas, instead of going into the streets, I said, 'We will go into such and such a court.' Of course I found a public-house, opposite which we took our stand, and I gave out a hymn. The publican came out and said, 'You must move off.' 'No, thank you,' I replied, 'we will stand still.' 'But,' he said, 'you must move.' I replied, 'We are not going to move; we will go on with our singing.' He went to fetch a policeman, and the policeman came and said, 'I must trouble you for your name and address.' I asked, 'What for?' 'This gentleman wants it,' he replied. I said, 'Who is this gentleman?' 'He is the proprietor of that public house,' I said. 'Will he prosecute me?' 'Oh, yes!' was the reply. 'Very well then, here is my name and address.' But he did not prosecute us for it. The following Sunday we went again. The publican said, 'If you do not go I shall have to take the law into my own hands; I will go upstairs and throw some water on you.' Of course we did not move, and the publican went upstairs—he to one window and his wife to another—and when we were busy preaching, singing, and exhorting the people to sign the pledge and to become Christians, down came the water. That was a grand day for us. I believe in cold water. A group of little children were standing round, and they had not several changes of clothes. They had only the one lot, and the dear children were saturated to the skin with the publican's water, and they ran home crying, and down came their mothers. Well, it was a grand sight to every one of us. We had no need to fight any more; these women did the fighting—and those who could not fight with their fists fought with their tongues, and I will tell you what they said. 'We will never come into your house (the publican's) any more. We have spent our money at your house and this is the way you are serving us in return—we will never come in again.' And here let me say that that public house is closed to-day."

## A STOCKBROKER'S SACRIFICE.

"Some few months ago I went into a suburb of London to conduct the services for the day. I was asked to the home of a gentleman, a member of the Stock Exchange, and himself, his wife and myself were dining together. A bottle of stout was put on the table for the lady, a bottle of Bass's ale for the gentleman, and a small decanter of water for myself. They rather apologised for having the drink on the table. I said, 'Do not apologize. Let me tell you this—there is one sacrifice which is acceptable to God rising from this dinner-table. I like a glass of stout or a glass of bitter quite as well as you do; but is my appetite to rule, or am I to rule it? Is my appetite to rule all the action of my life, or am I to rule myself?' I said, 'My usefulness, my influence very much depends upon my being a total abstainer, and if I wish to be a thoroughgoing servant of God, so that I can put my arm round the poor drunkard and lift him up, I must be a total abstainer. Therefore, I say, 'Go appetite, and come power of God, come power for service'—that is the sacrifice that is rising up here to God.' After the dinner was over the gentleman said, 'I have never looked at the question from that stand point; I will make the sacrifice.' 'Very well,' I said, 'but call your wife first.' I always like to consult the ladies. The lady came downstairs, and after we had talked it over, they both signed the pledge in my Bible. As we were walking along to the evening service, I said to my friend, 'Christ is never in our debt; you never make a sacrifice for Him but what He pays you for it at the first opportunity. Keep your eyes open, and watch for some great blessing from God.' At the service that very night—he had been praying for the conversion of his wife for many years—his wife rose in the congregation and signified her intention of becoming a disciple

of Jesus Christ. She walked down before all the congregation, followed by fifteen other women, and there commenced in that chapel a revival of religion. That man had never prayed or spoken in public, but the moment he saw his wife march down the aisle of the chapel, he uttered praise to God from that night. He is now a local preacher; he started a temperance society, and they have over a hundred members in it at this moment, and he himself is the president. He started also a Band of Hope."

## A TRADESMAN'S SON IN RAGS.

"After I had formerly signed the pledge at Oxford, one of the members of the Oxford University came and rang my bell, and asked me if I would go and see a man who was a drunkard. I had gone to bed but I got up and accompanied this young man. I went into a very small room and there, sitting on a broken chair, was a man in the depth of misery and poverty and sin. I looked at his wife, who was sitting on a bed of straw in a corner of the room with her children half-starved and poorly clad. I looked at the man, and saw in him the son of one of the leading tradesmen of that city, and I knew that within half a mile of that very room his father was living in luxury. I said to myself and I said to him, 'What has brought you down to this?' He replied, 'It is the drink;' and as I talked to him I found out what an awful curse this drink had proved to him and to his wife, and to his family. I took out the pledge book and we knelt together at the throne of grace, and that night that man and woman signed the temperance pledge. As I left the room to go into my own house, I thanked God that I had signed the temperance pledge."

## AN OXONIAN LUNATIC BY DRINK.

"Two or three days after that a tradesman living very near to me—a man who had recently married a beautiful woman, and a large fortune had come into his hands—was at the Epsom races, and had won a lot of money at the Derby. All the day long he had been going to and from the drinking place, and I said to him, 'You had better leave off drinking, my friend, or I am afraid it may bring you into trouble.' He said, 'You mind your own business.' I replied, 'That is my business. My business is to get you to sign the pledge.' He paid no heed, but went again to the drinking place. I saw him afterwards and begged him to sign the temperance pledge, and he was on the point of striking me. I again urged him, but he refused. He got up into his trap, but would not allow his man to drive him; and as he was going down High Street, Oxford, he came into collision with a doctor's carriage. He was thrown out, and he is in a lunatic asylum at this moment. Then my eyes began to be opened. I saw what an awful thing the liquor traffic was, and I found within me a fire had been kindled—a fire of hate to this abominable traffic, and it is burning more brightly to-day than ever."—*Christian Herald*.

## A CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SEXTON.

Dr. Hamlin, of Washington, in an address at the St. Louis meeting, told the following story:—

A prayer-meeting was being held in a rural church that was weak and growing weaker by the removal of members and by death; and there was a young man in it who had recently found the Saviour, and he was full of love and zeal. He made a little address; it was a warm-hearted and earnest talk; and at the close of it he quoted these words: "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," and sat down. They sang the hymn, "All my doubts I give to Jesus;" and he joined most heartily in the singing. When they reached the last verse, beginning, "All I am I give to Jesus," something in him said, "Do you mean that?" "Why, yes," he said, "I mean it." And then he began to think: "Do I mean it? Am I in earnest about it? Would I be willing to be anything and do anything for Christ's sake?" The hymn ceased. Then the committee of the church began to make a report upon the finances of the church. They were falling behind. They had made every

effort to raise every dollar they could, and they had succeeded in getting enough for the ensuing year except money to pay the sexton. The sexton had just moved away. They needed seventy-five dollars; nothing less would pay for a sexton, and a gloom fell upon all the congregation. This young man had been saying, "In my heart do I mean it?" Then he arose and told the people what had been passing in his thoughts. He said, "I did not mean it; I found that I did not; but, thank God, now I do mean it, and I will be your sexton for the next year." They accepted the offer, and without pay he did the work. It was better work than they had ever had done for pay, but he had a hard time of it; for if there is one man that gets more kicks and cuffs than the minister, it is the sexton. Everybody finds fault with him. But through the year he persevered. He had not sung quite so loud as he had been singing; he did not testify quite as glibly as he had been testifying; but he was able to say, "Yes, I did mean it. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Christian Endeavorers, exercise yourselves thus, and you will grow strong in the Lord unto perfect manhood and womanhood.

## THE ROUNDSMAN'S CHRISTMAS STORY.

So you're a writer, and you think I could  
Tell you some story of the Christmas time—  
Something that happened to myself, which you,  
Having the rhyming knack, might put in  
rhyme!

Well, you are right. But of the yarns I mind  
The most are best untold, they are so sad;  
My beat's the shadiest in town you know,  
Amongst the very poor and very bad.

And yet from one of its worst places, where  
Thieves gather who go round with murderous  
knives,  
A blessing came one Christmas day that brought  
My wife and me the sunshine of our lives.

The night before, I had at last run down  
Lame Jim, the captain of a river gang,  
Who never had been caught, although his deeds  
Were such that he deserved for them to hang.

And as he sprang upon the dock I sprang  
Like lightning after him, and in a trice  
Fell through a trap door, and went sliding down  
Upon a plank as slippery as ice.

I drew my pistol as I did, and when  
I struck the earth again, "Hands up!" I cried;  
"I've got you now," and at the same time flashed  
The light of a dark lantern every side.

I'd landed in a big square room, but no  
Lame Jim nor any other rough was there;  
But from some blankets spread upon the floor  
A child looked up at me with wond'ring stare—

A little girl, with eyes that shone like stars,  
A sweet, pale face, and curly, golden head.  
"Why did you come so fast? You woke me up,  
And scared me too," in lisping words she said.

"And now I am not scared for I know you.  
You're Santa Claus. My stocking's on the wall.  
I wish you merry Christmas. Where's my toys?  
I hope you've brought a lovely cup and ball."

I never was so taken 'back, I vow;  
And while I speechless stood, Jim got away.  
"Who are you, pretty one? at last I asked.  
"I? Don't you know? Why, I am little May."

"My mother died the other night, and went  
To heaven; and Jim, my father, brought me  
here.  
It isn't a nice place: I'm 'fraid of it,  
For everything's so lonely and so queer.

"But I remembered it was Christmas-eve,  
And hoped you'd find me, though I thought  
because  
There was no chimney you might not. But oh!  
I'm glad you did, dear Mr. Santa Claus."

Well, Captain Jim escaped—the law, I mean,  
But not a higher power: he was drowned.  
And on his body near his heart, poor wretch,  
The picture of his baby girl was found,

And that dear baby girl went home with me,  
And never was a gift more precious given;  
For childless had that home been many years,  
And so she seemed sent to it straight from  
heaven.

God's ways are wonderful. From rankest soil  
There often grows a flower sweet and bright.  
But I must go, my time is nearly up.  
A merry Christmas to you, and good-night.  
—Anon.