

DECEMBER.

DECEMBER has come, a happy month for young people. Little Archibald says he wishes it were "always December."

"And why?" I ask.

"Because we have coasting and skating and snow-balling, and, best of all, *Christmas*."

Archie's thoughtful sister, Jeanette, says she thinks it is a "sober month." And why, sober, wise Jennie?

"Oh, it is the last of the year!"

Yes, a whole year will soon be gone, with all its gifts and blessings and opportunities to do good. It makes us all a little sober, does it not, to think that for all these we are to give account by and by? Let not the youngest forget that the eye of God is upon them in their pleasures, as well as their duties.

This may make life somewhat "sober," as Jennie said; but *never sad*, as Jennie knows. Indeed, I think Jennie is one of the happiest girls I know. She has learned to trust the Lord Jesus. She feels all the time that He is with her. She asks Him to help her in school, and her lessons are always learned. She asks Him to help her at home, and father, mother, Archie and baby Effie all find comfort and delight in Jennie. The old, blind, colored woman watches for her coming to read the words of Jesus to her. Her teacher in the Sunday School is not afraid to ask her the hard questions. The mission band at every meeting depend upon her presence and helpful words.

Jennie feels a little sober as the year closes, for she wishes she had done more for the dear Lord as the days went by. Yet she is as merry as any at Christmas, as happy in the gifts she makes and the gifts she receives; and she rejoices with a deep and heartfelt joy, such as the careless never know, in God's unspeakable gift of His Son.

Dear young readers, may this month be to each of you, as it will be to Jennie, a time of thoughtful self-examination to see if your feet are in the narrow way; a time of sorrow for short-comings; a time of gladness in the hope of forgiveness through Christ; a time of new purpose to serve this dear Saviour in the future. So shall December have all the merriment which Archie finds in it, all the sober joy which Jennie finds in it.

King's Messenger.

MISSION BAND PAPER,

READ AT BRANCH MEETING, SUSSEX, N. B.

WELL, with all my experience with Mission Bands I have never yet worked with one that was really and truly interested in the heathen."

These words, spoken by a lady who had been President of Mission Circles for many years, surprised me not a little, so I quickly asked if she were really in earnest?

"Why, of course I am, as it is now an indisputable fact that young people are rarely interested in an object or cause with which they are not brought into personal contact."

"But, my dear woman, you cannot possibly mean that all our Band girls are perfectly indifferent concerning their work?"

"No, certainly not, what I contend is that the members individually have no real interest in the live heathen; they realize that Mission work is a grand and noble cause and willingly hold meetings and raise money to help it along. Of course the exception only proves the rule, as here and there we do find a good little soul, who actually takes delight in perusing Missionary literature and makes many a sacrifice for the sake of her heathen sister."

"If such is the case," I exclaimed, "What will become of our future Auxiliaries?"

"Don't worry about them, for although these girls are apparently indifferent, they unconsciously take a greater interest in their work each year, so in time, realizing it is the proper thing to do, join the Auxiliary and in due season become its shining lights."

"But do you not believe that Mission Bands should be educated up to the highest standard of Mission work?"

"By all means, but not a compulsory education upholding the idea that if the members are not completely overpowered with the sad condition of the heathen all other interest is null and void. The President should study the different characters of her Band, and so arrange the programme that all will not only be interested but permanently instructed. Now, to my mind an ideal Mission Band meeting should run thus: Singing, alternate Scripture reading by President and Band, sentence prayers and the Lord's prayer in union, roll-call, responded to by hymn verses, minutes, etc., etc. A few bright remarks by the President, introducing the subject of the evening. Shall we say it is China? The members will have prepared verbal questions and answers, a map of China, with the Mission stations marked, will hang on the wall for reference; music is of course interspersed through the programme and if possible a small table holding Chinese curios will add quite a little to the evening's entertainment. After the closing prayer all remain for twenty minutes, shake hands and have a social chat, introducing any strangers who may be present. The Corresponding Secretary here distributes her PALM BRANCHES; this little paper is now really invaluable and the editor deserves great credit for making it so intensely popular. That reminds me I often notice contributions in it from the Upper Provinces, but where are our own Band girls down here? Are they not interested in the success of their paper? There are fifty-three Bands in the N. B. and P. E. Island Branch, now if each of these would send in one article every year how it would help the editor along. We must remember that she has other duties to perform as well as ourselves, and that it is decidedly no fun for anybody to prepare a leaflet such as we receive each month. Many a time Miss Smith has patiently waited until the eleventh hour for contributions and then, rather than forward us our deserts, she sits down and writes up articles to fill in. Of course only a talented person could do this, but it really does not seem right to allow so much work to fall on one pair of shoulders. I should not, however, be too