

what I was up to, I tell you. Now for a little treat."

He took an old blue mug out to a hiding place where he kept his cider, filled his mug, and returned. He offered the mug to his companions, but an invincible "no sir" met every proffer from Sam.

"He is getting too much," one said to another as they saw Sam drinking. "The stuff is strong."

Sam did stop, but his tongue was loosened and his talk was silly by this time.

"Hush!" he said. "What's that noise outside? I'll go out."

He took the lantern in one hand, his empty blue cider mug in the other, and he went out. He was gone about fifteen minutes and then returned.

"Where have you been, Sam?" asked Silas.

"Been?" he replied. "Oh I went to the road with some old fool—"

"Who was it?" asked John.

"Couldn't say, John. Some old fool, and I intimated as much to him. You see I could not make him out, for he had on a long ulster, and a collar was turned up and the rim of his hat turned down. I think he said he had lost his way."

"Lost his way?" said Tim. "Wonder who it could have been? Oh I tell you, the man that carries the mail to Tylerville! He comes across the mountain spur, as we call it, and folks have said it was fool-hardy."

"Fact is—ha—ha!" said Sam, "I gave him to understand that it was about as silly a thing as he could do—his getting lost—yes, I told him. Then he said to me it was not so silly as getting lost through the old mug in my hand, for he said he thought it was a cider mug, judging by the smell—"

"He had you there!" cried Tim.

"He had me? I gave him a shot then," replied Sam.

"How?" asked Silas. "Fire the mug at him?"

"Gave him a piece of my mind, sir."

The conversation soon ceased, and the boys had supper.

It was about a week after this, when the boys were at home, that Sam and Silas chanced to meet. Silas remarked, "What makes you look so blue? Got your death sentence?"

"Yes," said Sam, moodily. "Have just had a note about the Academy where I was going to attend, you know. Whom do you think I saw that night at the camp, that man who had lost his way?"

"Mail-carrier?"

"No, Principal Spear!"

"You don't say!"

"But I do say it, and all is lost through that old cider mug. You wanted to know, or somebody did, if I fired my mug at him. I am going to get it and fire it at something and never touch one of the kind again."

In a few minutes Farmer Bartlett, who was reading his paper in the kitchen of his comfortable home, looked up and said to his wife, "Huldah, what's that sound outside, of a sort of smashing?"

"I heard it, but don't know," said his wife.

Sam knew.

PROFITS OF THE RUM TRAFFIC.

"I HAVE made a thousand dollars the last three months," said a prosperous liquor-seller to a group of men standing near his saloon.

"You have made more than that," quietly remarked a listener.

"What is that?" was the quick response.

"You have made wretched homes, women and children poor, sick, and weary of life. You have made my two sons drunkards; you made the younger of the two so drunk that he fell and injured himself for life. You have made their mother a broken-hearted woman. Oh, you have made much more than I can reckon, but you will get the full account some day."

Ben's Excuse for Old March.

BY M. THAYER ROUSE.

Oh, hurry for the March wind! A long, lusty shout,
Quite as loud as he gives in his blust'ring tone.

His his way to be rough,
To make racket enough
For a whole dozen breezes, bustling about,
With a rattle and grumble and groan.

Oh, he rattles the latch, and he taps at the pane;
Then he laughs at the fellow who shivers and shakes,
And whosoever he goes
On his trumpet he blows.
Down the chimney he whistles, with shrill might and
main;
And he shrieks till the echoes he wakes.

Oh, he's full of his pranks, and he'll play you at catch,
And he'll race with you, too, till he beats;
And he'll blow you away
And back the same day,
But look out for the rogue, for he's likely to snatch
All he can, from whomsoever he meets.

But he's only in fun, for his meaning, I'm sure,
Is to have a rare frolic, and not to annoy;
It would take all the starch
Quickly out of old March,
Should he know people call him a regular boor,
For at heart he's a regular boy!

OUR PERIODICALS:

PER YEAR—POSTAGE FREE.

The best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular.

Christian Guardian, weekly.....	\$3 00
Methodist Magazine, 101 pp., monthly, illustrated.....	2 00
Methodist Magazine and Guardian together.....	3 50
Stanzas, Guardian and Onward together.....	4 00
The Wesleyan, Halifax, weekly.....	1 50
Sunday-School Banner, 52 pp., 3vo., monthly.....	0 60
Onward, 8 pp., 4to., weekly, under 5 copies.....	0 50
5 copies and over.....	0 50
Pleasant Hours, 4 pp., 4to., weekly, single copies.....	0 30
Less than 20 copies.....	0 25
Over 20 copies.....	0 24
Sunbeam, fortnightly, less than 10 copies.....	0 15
10 copies and upwards.....	0 12
Happy Day, fortnightly, less than 10 copies.....	0 15
10 copies and upwards.....	0 12
Heran Leaf, monthly, 100 copies per month.....	5 50
Quarterly Review Service. By the year, 24c. a dozen; \$2 per 100 per quarter, 6c. a doz.; 50c. per 100	

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

Methodist Book and Publishing House,

29 to 33 Richmond St. West and 30 to 36 Temperance St., Toronto.

C. W. COATES,

3 Bleury Street,
Montreal.

S. F. HURSTIN,

Wesleyan Book Room,
Halifax, N.S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 12, 1892.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

THE Chinese in some directions are as cruel as they are superstitious. If they are kind to their parents they are inhuman to their children. The girls suffer most. Their feet are tightly bound to keep them small, in a way to give them constant pain. The wail of the poor foot-bound girls is heard far and wide in China. And in some provinces parents kill their daughters and nothing is thought of it. It is said that in the great city of Foochow, more than half of the families have destroyed one or more of their daughters.

What can save such a people but the Gospel of Jesus? It is pleasing to close this sad story of wickedness and superstition by telling how the light is beginning to shine in the midst of the darkness. Forty years ago no Protestant missionary was permitted to live within the bounds of China. Now twenty-six missionary societies are maintaining labourers, and over 300 churches have been organized, having probably over 20,000 persons connected with them, while there are many thousand more who have left their idol-worship, and are hearing the Gospel of Jesus. It is said that as many as 600 native Chinamen are now employed as preachers or Christian teachers. Will not some of the young people who have read the story of China ask God to fit them to go to that land with the blessed Word of Life?

GET THE MOST GOOD OUT OF BOOKS.

You should treat a book as you would a person with whom you are talking for information; that is, question it, read it over and turn back and try to get at the meaning; if the book itself does not answer the questions you raise, go to some other book, ask a dictionary or encyclopedia for an explanation. And if the book treated in this way does not teach you anything or does not inspire you, it is of no more service to you than the conversation of a dull, ignorant person. I just used the word "inspire." You do not read all books for facts or for information merely, but to be inspired, to have your thoughts lifted up to noble ideas, to have your sympathies touched, your ambition awakened to do some worthy or great thing, to become a man or a woman of character and consideration in the world. You read the story of a fine action or a heroic character—the death of Socrates, or the voyage of Columbus, or the sacrifice of Nathan Hale, or such a poem as "The Lady of the Lake"—not for information only, but to create in you a higher ideal of life, and to give you sympathy with your fellows and with noble purposes. You cannot begin too young to have these ideals and these purposes, and therefore the best literature in all the world is the best for you to begin with. And you will find it the most interesting.—Charles Dudley Warner, in *January St. Nicholas*.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

JOHN WESLEY was saintly in piety, but not more so than Fletcher; a prince among orators, but not the equal of Whitefield; a charming poet, but surpassed by his brother Charles; a master in scholarship, but not superior to many others of his day; but in thoroughness of devotion, self-sacrifice, wise and tireless work and masterful organization, he had no superiors or equals in his own age, or scarcely in any other. Hence the mighty Methodist movement which stirred England and marvellously influenced the religion of the Western world. With all his endowments and grace, if Wesley had confined his labours to a single parish, the Methodism born in the eighteenth century would have been impossible, and the history of Protestant Christianity for the century now closing would have been widely different from what it is.

Asbury, the restless, self-forgetful, laborious, heroic apostle of Methodism on the American continent, followed by his coadjutors in the ministry and laity, men of like faith and zeal with their matchless leader, carried the flag and forced the fight wherever the enemy could be found. And they were irresistible. Their sanctified zeal overcame all obstacles. They went everywhere planting the Church. Because of these things American Methodism of to-day is the largest and most aggressive religious force of the country.

Men differ in accounting for the wonderful growth of Methodism. Its doctrines; its polity, particularly the itinerancy; the freedom of its form of worship; its singing; its revivals, have each in turn—and possibly others—been insisted on as the true explanation. We will not venture into this question. As we see it, no one of these things is sufficient to account for the result. It is due rather to the "mighty working" of all of them by men and women of zeal, "full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith." It would have mattered little how good the doctrines were, if they had not been preached; how wise the economy, if it had not been worked; how inspiring the songs, if they had not been sung. It is because men have preached and toiled and sung under the constraint of the love of Christ, and under a weight of responsibility which never lost sight of the Judgment Day, that Methodism has won its greatest victories. The secret of its success is downright, persistent, unconquerable hard work, energized and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

This never fails. By their holy zeal godly men have often moved whole communities, and won multitudes for Christ. The results may not have always wisely conserved, it is true; but the effects were produced. The zeal of good men cannot fail when used and directed by God.