

THE QUIET HOUR.

The Death of the 19th Century.

Our life passeth swiftly onward.
Each age in its turn must die,
Must pass the mysterious river,
And enter eternity.
The evening still changeth to morning;
Old age giveth place unto youth.
All hail to thee, Twentieth Century!
May thy motto be "Justice and Truth!"

Two old men were standing beside a river—a river black as night and still as death. One bent beneath the weight of a hundred years; the other counted his years by thousands. He addressed his companion gravely. "How have you used the hundred years committed to your keeping? What have you to show for them?"

The younger man turned to him with an eager smile. "You shall see, Father Time," he exclaimed, triumphantly. He waved his hand, and the air was filled with bright and airy sprites who came about him and stood waiting for orders. Another wave of his hand set them all to work. Some dragged long trains or lifted heavy burdens with swiftness and ease. Others flashed along wires, carrying messages thousands of miles with lightning speed. The air was filled with the clank and whirl of marvellous machines, which seemed to be able to do anything. The gathering twilight was brilliantly illuminated by countless electric lights.

"My inventions and discoveries surpass anything which the centuries before me could show," said the 19th Century, proudly. "The lightning is harnessed to my carriages; the great sun himself is compelled to paint my pictures. I can sail through the air, walk about under the sea, and sail swiftly over it, in defiance of wind and tide. I can study the stars through my telescopes, and examine things, which were invisible to my forefathers, through my microscopes. I can see through solid objects, and speak to people who are many miles away."

"You are very clever indeed," said Father Time. "Now you must die, and all these slaves of yours will serve their new master, and forget you. Soon, very soon, the 20th Century will laugh at your inventions, and call your machines 'antiquated' and 'out of date.' He will improve on them, and then call them his own, forgetting that he started life with all the knowledge you had toiled so hard to gain. Is this fair and just?"

The 19th Century bowed his head in shame, remembering that he had spoken in that fashion of the discoveries and inventions of the ages before him. He could not complain, for he felt that such ingratitude was only his due.

"What evil have you done?" said Father Time.

Then, through the darkness, came creeping ugly creatures, evil spirits who hated the light. The spirits of murder were called forth and questioned. "Why do you love to kill and destroy?"

The many voices in answer nearly all seemed to give the same reason: "We do it for love of money."

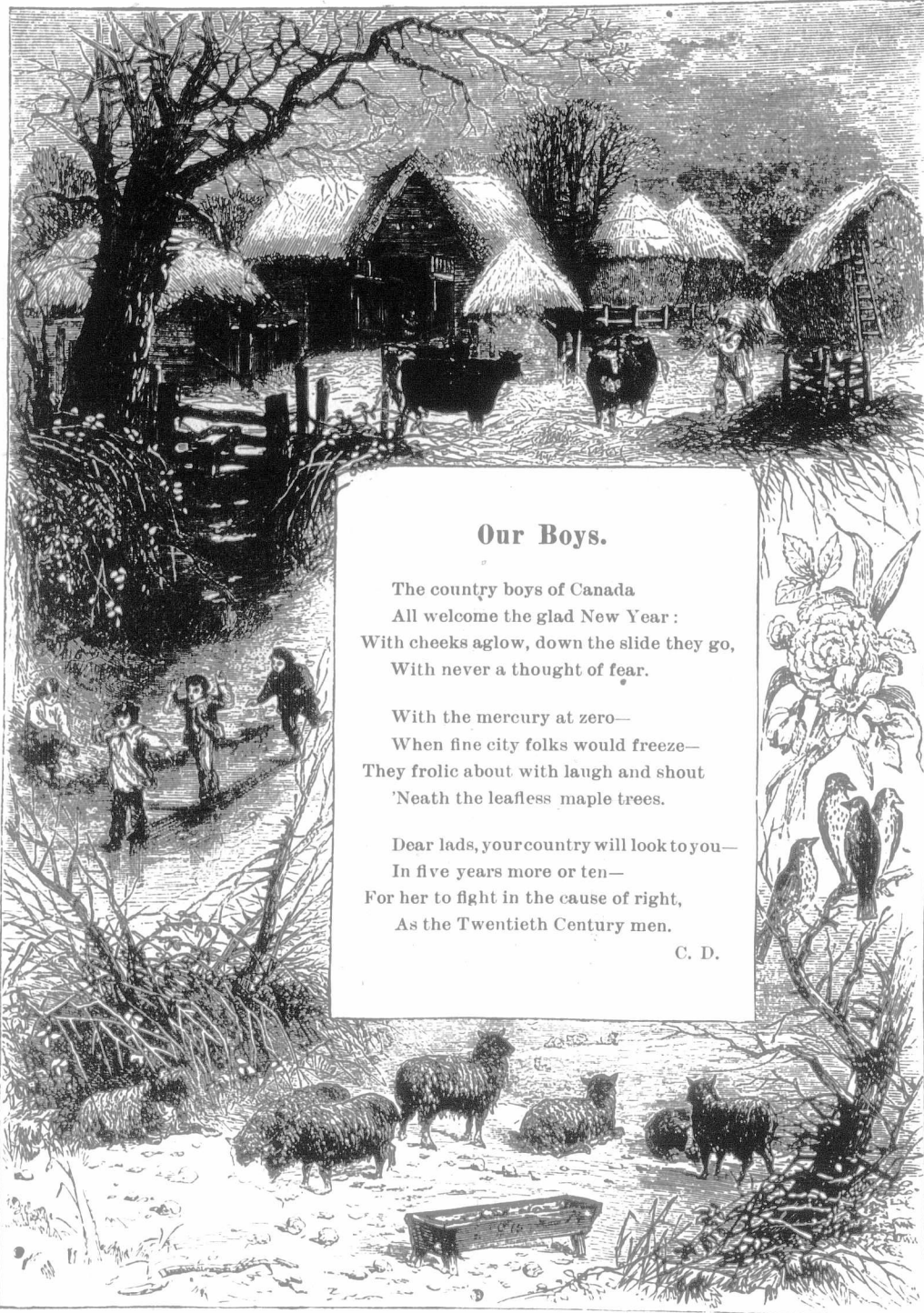
Some of the evil things crawled about like snakes on the grass; others flew about with bat-like wings. Father Time did not question any more, but said, sadly, as he dismissed them: "You have invented many new sins, and destroyed very few old ones; but it is not for me to judge you. These things, too, you must leave as a legacy to your successor. Perhaps he may be able to kill some of them. What good have you done?"

The 19th Century answered: "I have provided free schools for the ignorant, and compelled them to learn. I have saved many lives by my medical discoveries, and relieved pain in many ways. I have built an immense number of churches, hospitals, and other useful institutions; I have—"
He was interrupted by a number of people, who came from every direction, and were dressed in many strange costumes. Each one carried a Bible, and they crowded around the 19th Century, with grateful exclamations. "We were in darkness, and you brought us light," they shouted, in many languages. Then came multitudes of the sick and poor, who added their words of praise. "We were in misery, and he visited us and helped us," they said, lovingly.

Father Time smiled as he laid his hand tenderly on the bowed head of the younger man. He was really humble at last, this 19th Century. What might he not have done for the heathen if he had only put a little more heart into the work of missions! How many of the sick and needy were still neglected and downtrodden!

Then came the summons to enter the dark river. He went forward bravely, while his satellites turned to do homage to a young man who just then sauntered along. He looked at them unconcernedly, merely remarking: "Oh, you did very well for the 19th century, but you are a trifle old-fashioned, you know. I'll soon show you how to do things."

Meanwhile the spirits of love could not so easily forget their old friend. They lifted him up tenderly, and carried him through the cold, deep waters. The sound of their sweet voices came back to inspire the proud young 20th Century with a longing after better things than worldly greatness, for this was their song:



Our Boys.

The country boys of Canada

All welcome the glad New Year:

With cheeks aglow, down the slide they go,
With never a thought of fear.

With the mercury at zero—

When fine city folks would freeze—

They frolic about with laugh and shout
'Neath the leafless maple trees.

Dear lads, your country will look to you—

In five years more or ten—

For her to fight in the cause of right,
As the Twentieth Century men.

C. D.

"Thou hast not failed! Where holy love and truth
Content with evil failure cannot be!
Their sorest scars claim reverence, not ruth;
Their worst repulse is still a victory!"

The young king then went quietly forward to take his rightful crown, no longer proud of his own great attainments, but rather grateful to those whose successes and failures had taught him wisdom. The centuries gone before still lived in him, and his grand and glorious heritage was a gift from them. Great privileges were his, and a great burden of responsibility too, for the good that a man does lives after him, and also the evil.

"Alike are life and death,
When life in death survives,
And the uninterrupted breath
Inspires a thousand lives.
Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.
So, when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men."

HOPE.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

Who Filled the Stockings?

The rain was swiftly falling
On a Christmas-eve long ago,
When Santa Claus said to his wife, "I fear
There's something the matter, I feel so queer:—
Do you think you could take my place, my dear?
For this rain is far worse than snow."

In bed she tucked him snugly,
With a nice hot brick at his feet:
Then the dear old lady bustled around,
Ransacked the storeroom, with never a sound,
And a goodly supply of treasures found,
Which she neatly packed in a sheet.

The children were soundly sleeping—
There were four of them, as you see,—
The stockings were hung in an even row,
With a name pinned tightly to every toe—
"For Santa might make a mistake, you know,"
Said wise little Marjorie.

The midnight bells were ringing

When Jimmie awoke from a doze:
And widely he opened his eyes so
brown,
For Santa was taking the stockings
down.
But could this be Santa in black stuff
gown?
Had he dressed up in woman's
clothes?

But Jimmie's eyes were
heavy,
And he shut them to take a
nap:

The next thing he knew they were
shaking him,
And shouting, "Get up! It is Christ-
mas, Jim!
Our stockings are full to the very brim.
Stop snoring, you lazy old chap!"

Some years ago this hap-
pened,

But Jimmie is wondering still
Why Santa Claus should choose to
appear
Dressed up for a joke in woman's gear.
He never will guess the sad truth, I
fear.
That the poor old fellow was ill.
C. D.

The Lookout Regiment.

I have received the follow-
ing communication from one
of the soldiers:

DEAR GENERAL,—

Do you think you could make me
captain of one of the regiments? I
don't think we are going to have a rink
this year, so I would have plenty of
time to look after my duties. If you
think you could possibly make me a
captain, please tell me what I would
be expected to do. Do you think it
would do to divide the boys and girls
up equally into regiments, give each
regiment a captain, and you be
general of all the regiments? Al-
though I don't write much, I take a
lot of interest in the regiment, and
hope I am not asking too much alto-
gether, because I would like to be a
captain, and the only way to find out
if I can is by asking, and if you allow
me to be one I will try my best to do
my best. Don't you think if my sug-
gestion is any good you could choose
the captains of each regiment, and let
the captains you choose hold their
posts for about three months. Then
have an election and if the majority
vote for the captain you have chosen
let him hold his post for another three
months. If the majority vote against
him, you choose another one for each
regiment.

Hoping my suggestion is not alto-
gether worthless,

I remain loyal,
JEMMIE MATCHET.

I am always glad to hear
from you, Jemmie, and hope
you got my letter explaining
that each company must con-
sist of at least four members
living in the same neighbor-
hood. The captain of each
company is expected to report
progress from time to time.
Our regiment is fighting

against sorrow and trouble, and each soldier should
be always ready to stretch out a helping hand to a
comrade—everybody within reach is a comrade. To
shovel a little snow, cut a little wood, carry a pail of
water, etc., for some one who needs help; to do such
things willingly and cheerily either for your own
family or for a neighbor, without being asked—
all such kind actions are worth reporting. I would
rather hear that your company is lifting small
burdens for other people than that it is trying
to shoulder big ones; for you can find opportuni-
ties for doing such little kindnesses every day.

I was glad to hear that all the winners in the
last competition were pleased with the prizes sent
to them, and hope that the winners this time will
be equally well satisfied.

As this is holiday time, I will give you a few
old riddles with which to amuse your friends:

"Why is it dangerous to take a nap in a train?"
Because it always runs over sleepers.

"When do two and two make more than four?"
When they make twenty-two.

"What weed is most like a rent in a garment?"
A tare.

"When does rain become too familiar with a lady?"
When it begins to pat her (patter) on the back.