

ings it might not be unadvisable to refresh the parental memory. The worthy Saint who was born at Patara, and died Bishop of Myra in A.D. 343, was patron of young people and seamen. The custom of slipping presents into children's stockings while they are asleep is said to be founded upon a habit the good Saint had of doing good by stealth. It is also held that upon one occasion he secretly dropped a purse of gold down the chimney of a poor man so that the recipient might be able to give each of his three daughters a "dot" and so get rid of them by marriage. The following lines possess more of age than beauty—the last one going off at a tangent, and is evidently dragged in for the sake of the rhyme and a moral :—

Saint Nicholas money usde to give to maydens secretlie,
Who, that he still may use his wonted liberalitie,
The mothers all their children on the Eve do cause to fast,
And when they every one at night in senselesse sleepe are cast,
Both apples, nuttes and peares they bring, and other things beside,
As caps and shooes and petticoates, which secretly they hide,
And in the morning found, they say that this St. Nicholas brought :
Thus tender minds to worship Saints and wicked things are taught.

APROPOS of Christmas associations. Despite the assiduous preaching of the gospels of vegetarianism and prohibition, can any person imagine a festive season *sans* beef, *sans* wine? Would not such a feast be very much like a performance of "Hamlet" *sans* the Prince of Denmark?

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed: EDITOR OF THE WEEK, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.
Contributors who desire their MS. returned, if not accepted, must enclose stamp for that purpose.

PROHIBITION IN MAINE.

To the Editor of The Week :

SIR,—One of the benefits claimed to be derived from the prohibition of liquors is the diminution of crime. In the model State of Maine, where crime has increased over 200 per cent., while the population has increased only 14 per cent., the Hon. Neal Dow explains in a recent letter to the *Montreal Witness* that this increase is very much attributable to strong drink. He says the terrible increase in murder is mostly owing to this cause; and he apologizes for the enormous number of divorces—which are not classed as crime—by asserting that as compared with some other bad States, Maine is no worse off in this respect. He further says that \$500,000 will cover the cost of alcohol smuggled into the State, and we may be certain he does not exaggerate. For teetotalers even this is a very fair allowance, representing, as it does, one-third of a gallon to every man, woman and child. If we add to this what is legally sold under the drug-store licensing system, we may form our own estimate of the thirst of Maine, the more powerful liquors being washed with copious draughts of cider, equal to the strength of beer.

Mr. Dow's proposition seems to be "that prohibition of strong drink takes away the cause of crime; that prohibition does prohibit; yet that crime increases, and that its cause is strong drink." He then triumphantly asks whether the success of the measure is not amply demonstrated in its continuance by a majority of three-fourths of the polled votes. It might be said, if three-fourths produce such a state of affairs, it would seem to imply that either utter unanimity is requisite before complete success, or that full consent on the lines depicted above would make matters perfectly unbearable. Given three-fourths producing an increase in crime of two hundred per cent., what percentage would the whole produce?

But it is scarcely fair to make the whole population answerable for what was in fact, in its initiation, the work of only a noisy section, fanatical on the subject. The question is so mixed up with politics that in voting the Republican ticket a vast number sunk the lesser in what they considered the greater issue, i.e., the political, and Mr. Dow himself, in an unusually candid letter, written to the *London Times* of 6th October, 1883, refers to a certain section as "most respectable people, none of whom have any sympathy with the temperance movement, much less with the policy of prohibition," thus distinguishing himself unconsciously between "temperance" and the other thing. These things being so, we may fairly assume that the three-fourths majority was composed of contrabandists, druggists, politicians, illicit and legal drinkers, and the unhappy one-fourth of "most respectable people;" and it may be gratifying to working men to know that these "most respectable" were of the wealthy classes, and with whom the British Consul might fittingly associate. And it may be still more gratifying to know that to these same wealthy classes prohibition is merely a figure of speech which has no meaning to them practically.

W. H.

ANOTHER of Huckleberry Finn's adventures, by Mark Twain, entitled "Jim's Investments, and King Sollermun," will appear in the January *Century*.

WHEN Mr. Gladstone some months ago made a grant of £500 to Dr. Guisberg on account of the impending completion of the latter's edition of the "Massorah," by the publication of the third volume of that colossal work, it was believed that finality would have been reached with the issue of the same. This, however, is by no means the case in actual practice and experience. Dr. Guisberg's aim was to give the "Massorah" as it is at present, wherever it might be found, to show how it had been built up, and to explain it so fully as to make it easy for a person of average intelligence to understand. Dr. Guisberg now finds his labours prolonged by the discovery of important manuscripts, which, through Aden as an outlet, have been secured from the comparatively remote and unexplored regions of Central Arabia, and he is now engaged in editing a supplementary volume of the "Massorah," which shall take cognizance of these latest discoveries.

AT CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

MOANING, moaning, o'er the prairie, wail the chill December skies,
Silently the drifting hardens where a storm-beat wand'r'er lies :
Swift the weird-like shadows glooming, in the fading light of day,
O'er a lone heart sadly dreaming of a homestead far away ;
For he sees the dear old faces, chasten'd by the hand of Time,
As they sit around the ingle list'ning to the clang and rhyme
Of sweet-toned bells that far and wide
Ring in the gladsome Christmas-tide.

Borne above the north-wind's sobbing—o'er the clashing of the bells—
Float the tones of quaint old carols, touching chords of Memory's cells ;
But the blessed vision passes ; silent now the sweet refrain,
And the horrors of the Frost King rise before his ken again ;
One more effort, onward stagg'ring, till before his ice-lash'd eyes
Beams the log-wood's cheery firelight, and his wild despairing cries
Are heard by joyous hearts that glide
In the settler's dance at Christmas-tide.

Lanterns flashing, hounds a-baying, where a swoon'd form is found ;
Stalwart men and bright-eyed maidens, in the firelight gathering round,
List'ning to the wand'rers story : how he left his camp at morn,
Miss'd the trail, the blizzard's raging, how he lay, with strength outworn,
Till the storm had spent it's fury, and the numbness of his limbs
Warn'd him of insidious slumber, which for aye the senses dims—
How but for them he should have died
'Neath a shroud of ice at Christmas-tide.

Moaning, moaning, wails the North-wind, and the moonbeams break and pale
O'er a nestling, peaceful homestead, in a pleasant English vale ;
And around its glowing ingle kneel a gentle household band
Who are praying for an exile in a far-off foreign land :
Pray the mother, sire, and sisters, pray they for an only son,
Asking Heaven to shield, in mercy, him, the wayward, absent one ;
And by that prayer is Death denied
In the Western wilds at Christmas-tide.

H. K. COCKIN.

A CHRISTMAS REVERIE.

Ad Uxorem in Caelo.

THE hallowed Christmas-tide returns
And I, alas, must lay upon thy tomb
The kisses which I erst did'st print upon thy lips.
Thou art not here to take from hearts that loved thee
The greetings of the Christmas morn : the embraces
Of thy children ; the little gifts their loving hearts
Were wont to buy and press upon thee, eagerly scanning
The beautiful face to see it break in pleased surprise
O'er treasure which love, not commerce, most must value.
Nor ever more shall I or they receive at thy dear hands
The simple tokens of that love surpassing
Wherewith thou lovedst us ; nor hear again the music
Of that voice which though it break no more on ear of earth
Thrills ever angel-hearts within the gates of heaven.
Ah, God ! 'tis hard to learn the lesson—to see
That 'tis by sacrifice our hearts are drawn to Thee,
And that by snatching up our treasure the object of our worship
Shall be the idols of the home no more, but Thou, Jehovah,
Who, though Thou hid'st Thy face, art yet Our Father !
'Tis only thus we could have heart, O God, to bear the loss,
Or be submissive to the blow, and not rebel ;
'Tis but in knowing that Thou art He who doeth all things well ;
And however faint our hearts may grow and dull
That Thou art kind, and always seek'st to do us good,
And would'st draw us heavenward, e'en thro' the waters of affliction ;
Aye, and raise our souls as Thou hast raised the Christ,
That by His Cross and Passion, and by the blessed Resurrection
We all may pass from death to life, and meet as one in heaven,
Forever singing the song of triumph around the throne on high.
So, heart, be still awhile and murmur not
That Death hath entered in and stolen thy treasure,
For God hath but early garnered it for thee and thine ;
Nor let sorrow's surge o'erwhelm more thy household
That there comes not back a loved one to fill the vacant chair
And with the gladness of her presence hallow the Christmas feast.

Toronto, December 23rd, 1884.

G. M. A.

MESSRS. EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE have published for their chief Christmas book a very elaborately-illustrated edition of Barham's well-known "Lay of St. Aloys." It is marvellously well done. Mr. Jessop has written out the poem with his own hand, and gives a sketch for nearly every line of it. He has a genius for comic ecclesiastics. His bishops, abbots, monks and choristers are delightful studies of human characters. His careful drawing would delight the heart of Mr. Ruskin if he could be got to read an Ingoldsby legend. His owls, bats and crows are real studies of nature. The fun of the funny poem is brought out in a hundred ways.