

AN ANCIENT CHRISTMAS CAROL.

GOD rest ye, merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
 For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.
 The dawn rose red o'er Bethlehem, the stars shone through the gray,
 When Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye, little children, let nothing you affright,
 For Jesus Christ, your Saviour, was born this happy night.
 Along the hills of Galilee the white flocks sleeping lay,
 When Christ, the Child of Nazareth, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye all, good Christians, upon this blessed morn;
 The Lord of all good Christians was of a woman born.
 Now all your sorrows he doth heal, your sins he takes away,
 For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

To bow before the Newly-Born,
 Came from their home afar.

Their gold, and frankincense, and myrrh,
 In lowly love they brought;
 Each gift with precious meaning stored
 Beyond the giver's thought.

In tribute to the kings of earth,
 Their gold the nations bring;
 Therefore they offered gold to Him,
 Our own anointed King.

We'll run and do His kingly will,
 Whene'er that will is told
 By parents, teachers, brethren, friends:
Obedience is our gold.

Three times a day we'll meekly kneel,
 To thank His loving care,
 And ask Him to protect us still—
 Our *frankincense* is prayer.

Let disappointments in our hearts
 No evil tempers stir;
 We'll bear them as He bore His cross,
 For *patience* is our myrrh.

Before the mercy-seat of God,
 Rich frankincense was poured;
 And so they brought Him frankincense,
 To own him God and Lord.

In myrrh embalmed, in olden time,
 The dead were wont to lie.
 Then myrrh was taken meet for Him
 Who came on earth to die.

And little children as we are,
 We, too, would come and lay
 Our gold, and frankincense, and myrrh
 Before His feet to-day.

A merry Christmas? Certainly. Have we not all our pretty love gifts and our nice feasts to be merry about? God gave his Son on the first Christmas day to feast our souls. Our little gifts to each other, and our festive tables, are only types of that greatest of gifts, that richest of all feasts. Let us be glad, then, over our love tokens, and our nice dishes, because they all tell of love—our own friends' love and of God's love. May this Christmas be both a loving and a merry one to us all!

CHRISTMAS MISSIONARY OFFERING.

WE wish every teacher and scholar in our Sunday-schools the happiest Christmas and New Year that they have ever known. We know that our faithful, hard-working teachers have all the past year through been sowing the seeds of happiness in their own souls and the souls of others, from which we trust they shall reap a rich harvest of reward. We wish at present, however, to tell our younger friends how they may make the Christmas and New Year season doubly happy to themselves by the consciousness of doing something for the cause of God, and at the same time gladden the hearts of many a missionary's family sorely straitened on account of their narrow income, and also help to send the privileges of the Sunday-school and the preaching of the gospel to many who have them not.

God is opening doors of usefulness in different parts of our country, among new settlers in the backwoods, the fishermen in Newfoundland, the French in Quebec, the Indians in the great North-west, and the natives of Japan, faster than the Church is prepared to enter them. Everywhere the cry is heard, "Come over and help us." The fields are waving white unto the harvest on every side, and the Church of God is bidden to thrust in her sickle and reap this harvest of immortal souls,



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and it may not without guilt neglect this solemn command.

Now all this requires money. These people to whom our missionaries minister are many of them very poor and can do little for themselves. But what little they can do they do cheerfully. At one mission, at French River, nearly a hundred miles from the nearest white missionary, and only receiving his visits about once a year, a single family contributed one year \$26. Now we want every girl and boy in our schools to feel interested in these Home, Indian, and Japan Missions. Have your missionary box, and always put in it some of your pocket-money, especially at Christmas time. Every school, every class should have one of the boxes. The Rev. Dr. Sutherland, at Toronto, or your minister will be glad to give them if applied to.

In England the Juvenile Offerings in the Wesleyan Church amounted to \$107,000 in a single year, or one-third of the entire income raised in Great Britain. So much for thorough missionary organization. "We hope that all our Sunday schools will put forth a vigorous and systematic effort to make the Juvenile Christmas offering this year larger than it has ever been before. In recognition of God's great Christmas gift to all mankind, let them lay upon his altar an offering that shall declare their zeal, their diligence, and their desire for the glory of God and the salvation of souls."

Now for a general and a generous effort for the largest Christmas offering ever presented by the schools of our Church to the cause of Christian missions.

MISTRESS: "Well, Bridget, is there a fire in my room?" BRIDGET (a new importation): "Sure, mim, yis, there's a fire—but it's out."

AND who is this, looking out from amid the holly-bushes, this cold winter day? Whose sweet, merry, roguish face is this? She is wrapped up warm, she has gloves on her hands, and a nice thick hood on her head.

It is my niece, Clara. She has been out with her brothers and the men to gather holly and evergreen for Christmas. First they cut down a little pine for the Christmas tree. It was not so very little either; for it was twenty feet high.

There was snow on the ground, and they had a sledge on which to pile the hemlock-boughs, the evergreens, and the holly. Clara saw a squirrel run up a tree, and called to her brothers to look; but they were not quick enough to see it.

Then she spied a hollow place by the side of a hill, and going to look at it, she found it was a little pond of ice. It was smooth as glass, and she and her brothers had a nice time sliding on it.

Clara was sorry when it got to be twelve o'clock, and it was time to go home. The sledge was piled up with boughs, and the oxen wanted their dinner. Yes, they must go.

But when Clara was nestled in her little bed that night, and had said her prayers, this was her thought, "Oh, I never shall forget this happy, happy day; the bright, bracing air, so sweet and clear; the mild, soft sunshine, the smell of the pines; the frolic on the pond; the ride on the sledge; the little snowbirds that came in a flock when I began to feed them. Oh, I never shall forget it, no, never, never-r-r, nev—;" And with this last word half uttered, my little niece fell asleep.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:
 Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 13 1884.

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

AMERRY Christmas to the hundred thousand of readers of PLEASANT HOURS! That's what I hear the Christmas bells saying as their merry voices ring out, strong and clear, through the frosty air. I hope you all hear happy voices in their far-sounding and rejoicing notes.

A merry Christmas? Why not? Is it not the anniversary of the world's greatest joy-day? It speaks to us of the Bethlehem stable, the manger, the Virgin's babe; of the wondering shepherds, the glad angels, the curious wise men from the East; of the birth of Jesus our Saviour, who laid down his heavenly crown and sceptre, and joined himself to a soul and body like yours and mine, that he might redeem us, make us good, and, therefore, happy for ever and ever. Who can help being happy on so glad a day as this? Yes, Christmas is—must be—the gladdest, merriest, happiest day in all the gladsome year to those who know it to be the birthday of Jesus. Let us therefore all join in singing this Christmas carol:

This is the day when holy men,
 Led onward by a star,