

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

CHRISTMAS SONG.

Ring the bells out loud and clear;
Christmas comes!
Closing in a plentiful year,
Christmas comes.
Let each heart rejoice and sing
Glory to our Saviour King,
For His mercies freely given,
Peace on earth, and joy in heaven.

Ring the bells out loud and clear;
Christmas comes!
Closing in a plentiful year,
Christmas comes.
Grateful hearts can prove their love,
To their gracious Lord above,
By the love and truth they show
To His wretched poor below.

Ring the bells out loud and clear;
Christmas comes!
Closing in a plentiful year,
Christmas comes.
Doubly blest we'll be indeed,
If we share with those that need;
Giving from our ample store,
Comfort to the suffering poor.

Ring the bells out loud and clear;
Christmas comes!
Closing in a plentiful year,
Christmas comes.
Give all Christians as ye fare,
Bounty large or smaller share;
If no more ye can bestow,
Christmas love and greeting show.

JACK M'LEOD.

"THERE were three boys," said uncle Peter, "in my school, one winter, that were fun-loving, rollicking fellows, nothing really vicious or ugly in them, yet they made me a great deal of trouble. If I had occasion to mend or make a pen, set a copy or work a difficult sum, there was sure to be a twitter, which swelled to a snicker around the room. When I looked up all eyes would either be upon me or the 'three boys,' who of themselves never seemed so studious, at one of their tricks, by the way. Matters stood this way some days. I could find nothing special to accuse them of, yet I knew they were the cause of the whole disturbance. Something must be done. After one of these periodical snickers one day I went to them, and said, pleasantly:

"Boys, you seem to have a great deal of fun here all to yourselves, which is most too bad, now tell us all what pleases you so and we will enjoy the laugh together and have done with it, for we are here for something besides laughing. What is it?"

"Oh! nothing," they answered with such grimaces, that, of course, made the whole school laugh.

"If it is nothing, then we have had quite enough. You are the oldest in the school, and I had looked to you to help me preserve order, I am sorry to say I am much disappointed. I am satisfied you are the cause of all this confusion in our otherwise pleasant school.

"Now, while I do not intend to cane or flog, I want you to distinctly understand that I will not permit anything of this kind longer. Kenneth Ure, will you try to do better in the future, laying aside this silly waste of time, and help me by your example?"

"Yes, sir," answered the boy, frankly and readily.

"James Brown, will you make the same promise for the future; will you be a help instead of a hindrance?"

"Yes, sir," came slowly, as though costing

an effort. I expected opposition from this boy and was pleased with my success.

The other boy, Jack M'Leod, was the most good-natured in the school. I knew him at home as a pleasant boy. It was with easy assurance I turned to him and asked a similar question; to my surprise, he dropped his head and laughing, said:

"I dun-no."

"You don't know," I exclaimed, expressing my astonishment a little sharply. "You know whether you mean to go on annoying me and disturbing the whole school, or whether, like your companions, you are ready to make the same promise, don't you?"

"He-he-he, I dun-no," he chuckled. I turned away amazed yet determined. I went to the boy several times during the afternoon asking if he were ready to make the promise, always receiving the same answers, "He-he-he, I dun-no."

After the closing exercises of the school I requested Jack M'Leod to remain in his seat, which he did in a serio-comic manner, hands in his pockets, and eyes rolled to the ceiling, that sent the children laughing from the house. When we were alone, I said:

"We will make ourselves as comfortable as possible here; but you must understand that, be it a night or a week, you cannot leave this house until you have made up your mind to do differently."

No answer, but a very significant shake of the head.

I deliberately locked the door, putting the key in my pocket. I fastened all the windows, and renewed the fire. It was a short winter's day—cloudy, and threatening a storm. The wooden shutters rattled, and the wind whistled weirdly around the corners; quaint shadows crept boldly out from the darkness and lengthened on the walls; now and then limbs of the forest trees struck the old school house spitefully, or dragged their length on the roof as though making an entrance.

"By the way," I remarked, as though to myself, "we may as well have supper, we needn't starve." Stepping to the door, I called to some children, still lingering in curiosity, "run home and tell your mother to send supper for two here."

They scampered off well pleased to have something to do.

Jack's face grew longer and longer as the darkness deepened. I began a search from desk to desk, gathering a few stubs of candle left from a recent spelling school. I laid them in a row upon my desk, continuing my soliloquy.

"That piece may burn an hour, this, measuring and examining carefully, "an hour and a half,—I don't know, pretty small piece may burn a half-hour—the whole, perhaps, three hours." I heard a faint sigh, then an audible sob. I knew Jack had been looking at me, but as I turned, his head dropped upon his arms, stretched on his desk, in real grief, a pitiable sight in the dim light. Without noticing his dejection, I asked.

"Which would you rather do, Jack, burn these pieces in the forepart of the night, or reserve them to the last? The hours will seem long, I suspect, I do not think we can sleep much."

No answer.

I went to his side laying my hand upon his shoulder, continuing in the same voice, "Or would you rather give me the promise now and go home? Have you made up your mind?"

"Yes, sir," came with a sob.

"You think you will take care in the future to set a good example before the younger ones?"

"Yes, sir."

"You may go then."

He shot out of the door on a run. His home was a mile and a half through the woods. I had some misgivings. Not that I had done right, but I was engaged to a pretty cousin of Jack's, and I was not certain how the family would take it. I was soon re-assured. His father had started after him, and not getting much satisfaction from the boy as to his delay, came on to my boarding place. I explained just how it was.

"You have done a good thing," said the father. "Jack is a good boy, and so good-natured, that somehow when he does do wrong at home he slips out of it."

So it proved. John M'Leod has been a popular and successful minister many years. Only a few months since I met him, when he laughingly told the story of that night in the old school house, adding, seriously, "It was the turning-point of my life."—*The Interior.*

OFF THE TRACK.

"WHAT'S the matter?" Our engine gives a short, sharp whistle, then another. Up go the windows in the cars. Out go the heads of the passengers.

"What's the matter?"

"Engine off the track!"

"On our track?"

"No, on the next one."

"Then it won't keep us waiting, but we will see it as we pass."

Slowly our engine moves along. There is a crowd of people on either side of the railroad. Here is a gang of workmen, and here is the engine itself, which has slipped from the track. How helpless it looks! It cannot help itself back again, so two other engines have come to draw it up, and all these men, with their crow-bars, and pick-axes, and shovels, help too. It takes a long time, and many men, to get it up again, to put it in running order, and to mend the track. It is a great deal better every way for the engine to keep on the track, isn't it?

Do you know, little folks, that boys and girls, and men, and women, sometimes get off the track of doing right things? It is true that they do, and that makes sad work. It is hard to get on the track again, so look out and not be thrown off.—*Congregationalist.*

WHEN my grandfather saw a man drinking or carousing, or a boy spending all his money for cakes and sweets, "Poor fellow," he would say, "he's left off his bridle." The appetite needs reining, let it loose, and it will run you to gluttony, drunkenness, and all sorts of disorders. Be sure and keep a bridle on your appetite; don't let it be master. And don't neglect to have one for your passions. They go mad if they get unmanageable, driving you down a blind and headlong course to ruin. Keep the check rein tight; don't let it slip; hold it steady. Never go without your bridle, boys.