

# Northern Messenger

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## Our New Superintendent.

(By Henry Lewis.)

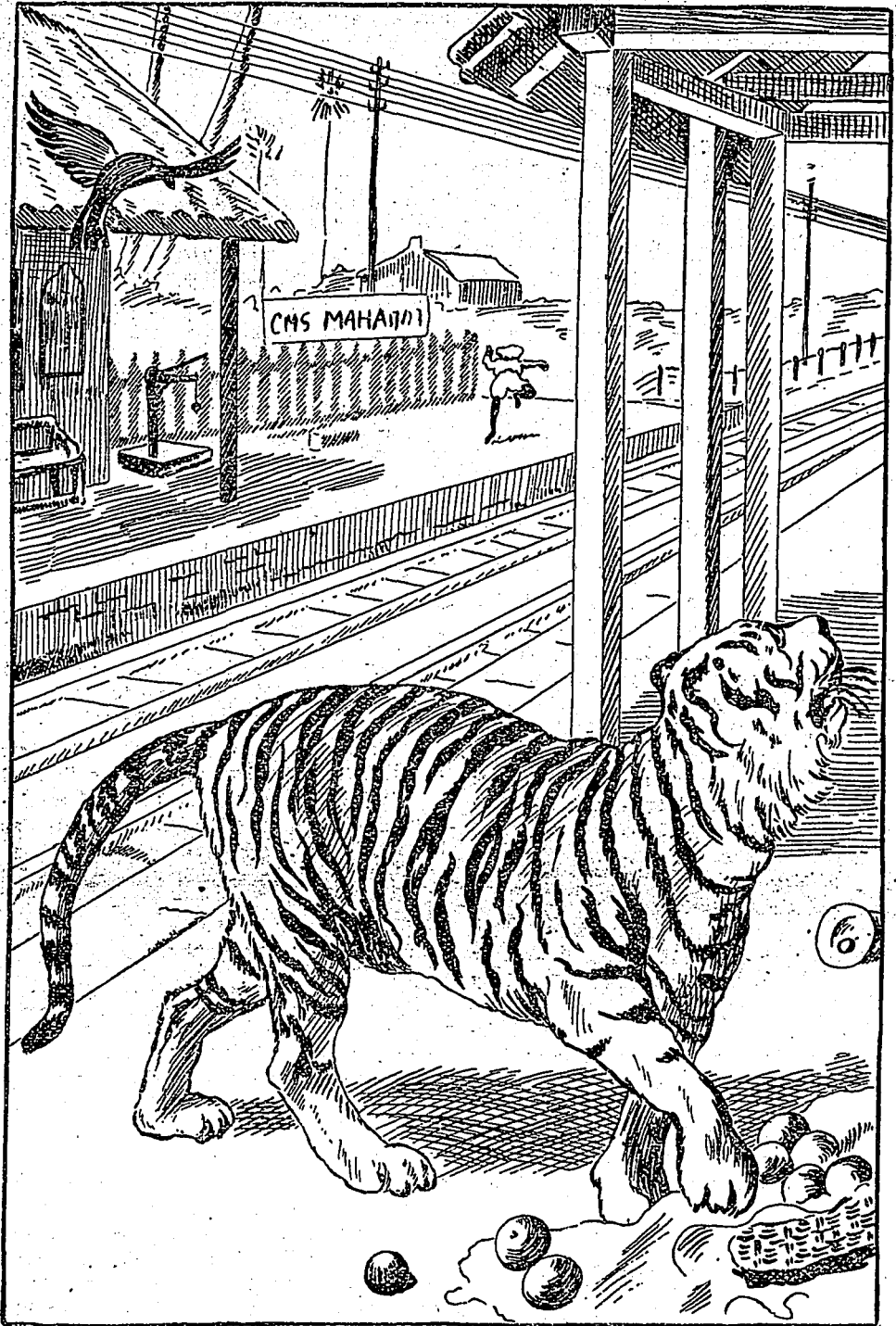
The Sunday-school at Bryn had never taken any active interest in examinations, and seldom, if ever, did a scholar express a desire to join the church. All the work it did was to make a collection once a month toward the annual Whitsun treat for the younger scholars. To make this treat a success was the only ambition of the superintendent as well as teachers. In one sense the school simply labored for the bread that perished, and made no effort to arouse the interest of the scholars in higher and nobler things. The Whitsun treat was the summum bonum of the whole school, and the natural result was that this treat was always a great success.

The superintendent would invariably call a committee of teachers the first Sunday after the treat, in order to receive suggestions how to improve the great annual feast. This treat was the inspiration of the school, hence no effort was spared to make it a complete success. But naturally enough, though the treat was a complete success, the school was not, for the boys and girls, though they would flock to the school in great numbers a few weeks before Whitsuntide, would also cease to attend the school soon after the treat. The average number of attendants during the year was something like two hundred, but at Whitsuntide the number would increase to three and sometimes four hundred.

One or two of the teachers would protest against permitting these 'strangers' and 'stragglers,' to accompany the school to the fields and to partake of the enjoyment for which they had been laboring so hard during the year. Of course, the protest was quite natural, but the superintendent argued that nothing could be done, for he hoped that these strangers would some day, for the 'loaves and fishes,' join the school.

Tom Pritchard, a young man of twenty-two summers, the son of a minister, having come to Bryn to practise as a lawyer, felt a desire to join himself to the Bryn Sunday-school; for he had been taught at home to respect the Sunday-school and labor for its success. He was a bright, keen fellow, and what is not very common among lawyers, he was a very spiritual young man; yet no one at Bryn, not even the minister, thought it advisable to invite young Pritchard to their Sunday-school; for one thing, they had no class they could ask him to join, and they had no class they could ask him to teach. However, imagine the school's surprise one Sunday afternoon when they saw the young man taking his seat beside the minister and making himself quite at home. The superintendent was in a fix, for he must find something for the young fellow to do. His first thought was to ask him to commence the school, and then leave him to perambulate the chapel with the minister. Now, Bryn Sunday-school had no class-rooms; they had a small vestry behind the chapel, and there the younger generation were taught A B C, or as the Welsh pronounce them, 'Ah, Bee, ek.' Bryn was nominally a Welsh school, and so the wee ones had to learn the Welsh alphabet, and then they were taught to read the Welsh Testament.

But very few of the younger generation at



AN AWKWARD VISITOR AT A RAILWAY STATION IN INDIA. — 'Home Words.'  
'Tiger jumping about platform, men will not work; please arrange.' — Extract from 'Telegram.'

Bryn could either speak or understand the Welsh language, therefore, the school, though nominally a Welsh one, was practically English. As it happened the vestry teacher was absent that Sunday and Pritchard volunteered to teach the young ones the 'Ah, Bee, ek.' Old Griffiths, as he was called, the superintendent, was a monoglot Welshman, but he could manage just a few words in English; and knowing Pritchard was a lawyer, he thought it would be more polite to speak to him in English, though Pritchard was a pure Welshman.

'You be not to tach the children, Mr. Pritchard, I will do that; you will kindly look after the school, you be more competant than me.'

The young gentleman refused to become the superintendent in that manner, but the old superintendent called the minister and a few of the chief teachers together, and the matter was there and then unanimously de-

ecided. Pritchard should be the new overseer, and Griffiths took the children.

'I thank you,' said the young man, 'for the honor, but I would like to emphasize the fact that a good teacher with the little ones, in many respects, is far more important than even a good superintendent. The children have their characters to make, and the kind of characters they will become depends to a great extent, upon the kind of teaching they now receive.'

When these words were uttered the minister, who was himself a comparatively young man, had hard work to keep the tears from showing themselves in his eyes. He had often longed, and even prayed for someone to come to Bryn to move the school to seek something higher and nobler than a grand annual treat. The treat was very well in its place, but to make the treat the one great object of their efforts, the thought, was too low and carnal an end for a Sunday-