

Christmas Carol.

BY HOPE ALTON.

Low, low in a manger a baby is lying,  
Bright over the mountains there shineth a star,  
A mother is hushing her baby's low crying,  
A chorus of angels is wafted from far.  
"Peace, peace to the weary to hearts sad and lonely,"  
Oh, hark! How the melody swells on the air;  
"To God in the highest, glory to him only,"  
Is the message so joyous the holy band bear.

To herald the Christ-child, the bright ones are singing,  
The Monarch of heaven lies cradled on earth;  
The kings of the Orient their tributes are bringing,  
Swift coming from far lands to welcome his birth.  
Down, down through the ages the chorus is ringing,  
Swung out by the joy-bells on fair Christmas days,  
Caught up by the children, so merrily singing  
In palace and cottage their sweet Christmas lays.

THE BURNING TREE.

There has lately been added to the collection of plants at the botanic garden at Madras, India, a specimen of a strange tree. It is in size scarcely more than a bush, but other individuals of its species are known to have attained, in their habitat in the Himalayas, Burma, and the Malacca Peninsula, the dimensions of a large tree, from fifty to seventy-five feet in height. The Madras specimen is surrounded by a strong railing, which bears the sign, "Dangerous—all persons are forbidden to touch the leaves or branches of this tree."

It is, therefore, says an exchange, a forbidden tree in the midst of the garden; but no one is tempted to touch it, for it is known to be a "burning tree." This name is a misnomer, for the tree stings rather than burns. Beneath the leaves there are stings comparable to those of nettles, which, when touched, pierce the skin and secrete a fluid that certainly has a burning effect.

The sting leaves no outward sign, but the sensation of pain persists sometimes for months, and is especially keen on damp days, or when the part which has been wounded is plunged in water. The natives in the part of Burma where this tree grows are in such terror of it that they fly in haste when they perceive the peculiar odour which it exhales.

A horse which had come in contact

with a "burning tree" ran about like a mad thing. A missionary at Mandalay, who investigated a leaf of the plant with his forefinger, suffered agony for several weeks, and for ten months suffered occasional darting pains in his finger.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 30.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.—Psa. 65. 11.

HOME READINGS.

- Mo. The lost sheep and lost coin.—Luke 15. 1-10.
Tu. Christmas lesson.—Matt. 2. 1-11.
W. The Prodigal Son.—Luke 15. 11-24.
Th. The ten lepers cleansed.—Luke 17. 11-19.
F. The rich young ruler.—Matt. 19. 16-26.
S. Bartimeus healed.—Mark 10. 46-52.
Su. Zaccheus the publican.—Luke 19. 1-10.

HELPS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Recite the Titles of the lessons and the Golden Texts.
2. Note the dates of the lessons; all of them except Lessons VIII. and XII. in

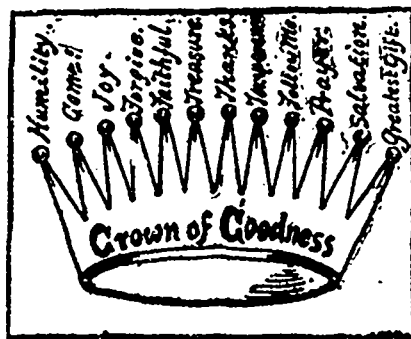
performed on his way to Perea and on his way out of it, when he had to pass through Jericho.

4. Note that Lesson XII, the Christmas story, and Lesson VIII, on Temperance, are detached from the historical course of the lessons.

5. How many parables are told in this Quarter's lessons? Name each, and give in a brief sentence the lesson of each.

6. How many miracles are recorded? Describe each, and give in a brief sentence its spiritual meaning.

7. How many lessons have to do especially with young people? How many with lost people? How many with the folly of drink and riotous living?



God crowns our years and he crowns us with goodness because he loves us. Look up, little princes and princesses. Are you not happy because our Lord has crowned you with love and goodness? He has given you these beautiful lessons. Are you thankful? Do you love him, will you trust him, will you please him every day because he loves you so? Those who wear crowns should live for the One who crowns them.

"Because the year is crowned with love This Christmas Day, Accept the crown of praise we bring; Dear Lord, we pray."

JACK'S SCAR.

Almost every boy has some kind of a scar. Theodore has a scar upon his cheek, made by falling against the stove; Albert a scar on his foot, cut with a hatchet; Franklin a scar on his shoulder, where a horse, named Lucy Lolly, bit him; but Jack's scar is not like these.

I heard about Jack's scar at the prayer-meeting last night, and a voice in my heart whispered, "Tell that story to all the boys you know."

Though, to be sure, Jack is not a little boy. He is a young man—a conductor on a railroad train.

A great railroad has its headquarters in our town, so almost every man is at work for the railroad company.

Last week a conductor was killed—somebody is killed nearly every week. While Jack with a group of his comrades stood sadly talking about the conductor's death, one of their number, a Christian gentleman, remarked, "There is hardly a man in the railroad service but has been in some way hurt—carries some scar." Whereupon Jack proudly replied that he had been in the employ of the railroad company for years, and he had never been hurt—he carried no scar; and to make his statement stronger, he used some very wicked words; for, alas, alas, Jack had learned to swear!

The gentleman looked sorrowfully at the young man. He knew his history; knew that Jack had not been brought up to swear, but that he had kept company with profane boys and men until he had fallen into the habit almost unconsciously, scarcely knowing when he did swear. "be comrade thought of all this, then said earnestly, "Jack, you do carry a scar." But Jack again asserted with an oath that he did not; he was very positive there was no scar upon him. "Ah, Jack, Jack!" answered the Christian friend, "you have a bad scar—in your mouth!"



ST. NICHOLAS MAKING HIS ROUNDS.

the winter of A.D. 29 and the spring of A.D. 30. Recall that Christ was crucified in the spring of 30. The shadow of the cross was over him through all these lessons.

3. Note the places. Most of the parables perhaps were told on our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem, as he passed through Perea, and the miracles were

And girls, too, sometimes have ugly scars. I know a lady who says she has a scar on her heart, made by listening to some bad stories one day, when she was a girl at school.

Dear boys and girls, you may not be able to prevent the scars of accidents upon hands and faces; but I implore you to strive earnestly all the time, fervently seeking the help of the Saviour, to keep your mouths and hearts free from the scars of sin.

What the Pine-trees Said.

I heard the swaying pine-trees speak As I went down the glen; "Next year," said one, "the wind shall seek, But find me not again."

"I shall go forth upon the seas, A mast, or steering-beam; On me shall breathe the tropic breeze, Above, strange stars shall gleam."

"And I—the axe shall cleave my grain, And many times divide; From my dear brood I'll shed the rain And roof their ingleside."

Then up and spake a slender shaft, That like an arrow grew: "No breeze my leafless stem shall waft, No axe my trunk shall hew—"

"But though a single hour is mine, How happy shall I be! Young hearts shall leap, young eyes shall shine, To greet their Christmas tree!" —The Independent.

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