

The Boy Who Tended The Sheep

There, lad, go rest thyself. The flocks are quiet, the fire burns brightly, there is wood in plenty for the long night. Thou has done well.

Bowing with due courtesy before his elders, the boy drew his robe of woolen stuff closer, and curled himself on the rim of the gilded circle which spread from the huge fire over the close-huddled flocks, the grave watchful shepherds, the soft green slopes of the pastures.

A good lad, continued the eldest shepherd in a low tone, but too young for the night watch. How comes he here?

He is the son of Joachim, explained one, in the same hushed tone, lest his words reach the boy's ear. A rare lad—devout, and of understanding far beyond his years. To-night Joachim needs tend his shop in the village because of the throngs of strangers with their clamoring needs. So the boy came in his father's stead.

Didst notice how his flock follows him? asked another. He has—but to lift his voice, ever so lightly, and they crowd to his hand. 'Tis a good portent, the animals have a true instinct.

Aye, they assented, and fell into silence, as the boy, with modest diffidence, rose and came closer to the fire.

Nestled there, his head cradled in a slim, brown arm, the boy lay wakeful, while the talk of the shepherds drifted to events in the little town of Bethlehem whose lights blinked faintly from her perch on her twin heights.

Never has the village been so overrun with travellers, declared one. This decree of Caesar's has compelled every man who claims Bethlehem for his birthplace to come up, with all his family, to be counted for taxation.

And a monstrous injustice it is! growled another. As if a man could not be counted where he hath made his home, without journeying over land and sea to the town where he chanced to be born.

'Tis the tyranny of a heathen ruler, and we must endure.

But not forever! cried the eldest shepherd. One shall come to deliver us—the Christ that was promised—the Messiah—theur king!

'Twas prophesied of old, and the priests and the doctors in the temple still await him—but the time is so long! Our eyes shall never behold him, sighed a wistful voice as the fire, blazing up, showed the circle of faces.

Nay, rebuked the eldest shepherd, how knowest thou? When I was but a tender lad, my young eyes yearned for his coming; now their sight is dimmed, but still they look for him. As surely as Jehovah rules his people, he shall come, our Messiah! Again, our race shall be exalted above all people; his power shall encompass the earth, and kings shall kneel before him!

They bowed, respectfully, as men who dispute not the authority of age, but the glow of the old man's countenance was reflected in no face save that of the boy. He sprang to his feet, eyes shining, voice tremulous with excitement.

And I shall serve the King! he cried—then paused, stammering, abashed at his own temerity.

A smile touched every grave face. For an instant their eyes were lighted with sympathy for ardent, impulsive youth, and the eldest shepherd spoke kindly.

It may be so lad. Prepare thyself. Be diligent in study, and keep the laws, that the King may find thee worthy when he comes.

Down on the soft, cool grass again, face upturned, blue eyes scanning the unwonted scenes about him, the boy lay very still. One by one the shepherds dozed into the light slumber to which they were accustomed, ready to wake instantly at the slightest stir of drowsing flocks.

But the sleep came not to the boy who, for the first time, kept the shepherd's vigil. His mind was whirling with the day's events: the crowds in the village, the busy hours in the shop; the thrill of delight when the flock was entrusted to his care for the first time; the joy of guiding the trusting sheep and the tender lambs over the trail to the pastures; his eager, tireless work with the fires and the flocks; the eldest shepherd's approval; the talk of Caesar's injustice and the coming king—ah, the coming king!

With the last thought, the young blood leaped hot in his veins again. He rose, silently, and made his way past the dozing shepherds the unconscious flocks, beyond the circle of the light, until he stood where the darkness was broken only by the

starlight. And such starlight! It lay like a shimmering dust over the pastures, it whitened the fat slopes to the sea. The Bethlehem road was a band of silver, and beside it the Migdar Elder shone in a jewelled spray.

Young face uplifted, young eyes radiant as the skies, he stood enraptured, while around him the starlight streamed brighter and brighter, and the stillness of the pastures deepened to an intense, breathless hush, as if Nature herself paused to gaze and listen.

Are the stars always so bright above the pastures? he wondered. I never saw such light over the village. And those white, feathery clouds—how they shine! They are drifting down—they come nearer and nearer!

Awed, but unafraid, he ran lightly back to the fire's circle and bent beside the eldest shepherd.

Awake! he cried. Awake, and see what strange thing is happening here!

The shepherds awoke, rubbing their eyes, dazedly, staring at the luminous mass which hovered now above their heads, dulling the fire's glow with its brilliance.

Hark! breathed the boy silencing their awed exclamations. List to the voice singing!

Over the hush of the pastures came a burst of music, faintly sweet, swelling clearer and stronger, until it seemed that clouds and stars, green earth and golden sky, were chanting together with mighty voice:

Glory to God in the highest,
On earth peace, good will toward men!
The white cloud drifted close, dissolved into shimmering fragments, and from their midst fluttered a form with lustrous robes and voice of unearthly sweetness.

Fear not, came the voice, as they fell on their knees, with bowed heads, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all mankind. For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Fearfully they lifted their faces, and the shimmering vapors had turned to countless wings, bearing white, slender forms, flashing upward, until they blended in fleecy, cloudlike mass from which the refrain floated faintly:

Glory to God in the highest,
On earth peace, good will toward men!
Didst hear the words? The Christ is born, in the City of David, which is Bethlehem. The Christ, our King! The prophecy is fulfilled. Now shall mine eyes behold the glory of Israel!

Unable to understand, yet gazed at one another, until one spoke, boldly:

Let us go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass.

With one accord they bound their robes closer, seized their long crooks, and were off across the starlit meadows toward the Bethlehem road.

I shall see Him! exulted the boy, following them. I shall serve Him! and his heart leaped with joy unutterable.

Oh, look! cried one, as they neared the upward trail, see the light that hangs over Bethlehem!

Above the heights where the the City of David nestled, hung a gleaming, roseate star of marvelous size.

'Tis a sign, to guide us to the King, said the eldest shepherd—and at that instant there came across the meadows a

(Continued on Page 7)



Christmas 1921

The President, Directors and Officers of

THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

desire to offer to the Customers and Friends of the Bank their Best Wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

PURE BUTTER PARCHMENT

Neatly Printed, cut in sizes for 2 lbs. and 1 lb. prints. Prices Right.

THE ACADIAN STORE

BUY IT IN YOUR OWN HOME TOWN

MILK AND CREAM

Beginning Sept. 1st, I will deliver Guernsey Milk and Cream anywhere in Wolfville.

Satisfaction Guaranteed. Early Morning Delivery.

Single quart 12 cents. Daily order of 3 quarts or more, special price.

Phone 3-14. **J. W. MEISNER**

ADVANCING PRICES

The price of BONDS has advanced during the past four weeks. I am offering subject to change in price

City of Edmonton, 7%, due June 1, 1941, 102 and Interest.
Town of Sydney Mines, 6%, 95.50 and Interest.
City of Moncton, 6%, 1940, 101, and Interest.
City of Fredericton, 6%, 1924, 100, and Interest.
City of Fredericton, 6%, 1930, 101, and Interest.
City of Fredericton, 6%, 1941, 102.35 and Interest.
City of St. John, 5%, 1935, 91, and Interest.
Province of New Brunswick, 4%, 1931, 86.24 and Interest.
Province of Ontario, 6%, 1943, 103.50 and Interest.
Province of Alberta, 6%, 1936, 101, and Interest.

Would be pleased to quote prices on any Bonds or Stocks you might require.

ANNIE M. STUART
Phone 22-31 INVESTMENT BROKER. Grand Pre, N.S.

Acetylene Welding

Battery Repairing and Charging.
Cylinder Re-boring and Accessories.

J. F. CALKIN
MAIN STREET EAST

Gift Suggestions

THE TORRINGTON Electric Vacuum Cleaner
WITH ALL ATTACHMENTS
For - - \$65.00

Regular price with attachments—\$77.00
A SPLENDID XMAS GIFT.

Woodman and Company
Furniture & Carpets. Phone 46-11.

A Christmas to Christmas Gift

- ¶ Every week in every month of 1922 the postman will knock at the door of your friend and deliver a gift for you at less than the price of a postage stamp each gift—if you say the word.
- ¶ You can bring this about by sending him a subscription to The Halifax Herald (12 months by mail, \$7) or The Evening Mail (12 months by mail \$5).
- ¶ 312 gifts at the price of one—a gift for every day in 1922, from Christmas-to-Christmas—that's the kind of a gift to give! This offer expires Dec. 31st, so mail your subscription today.

THE HALIFAX HERALD
THE EVENING MAIL

All the News
All the Time

Please send me the
for months for
which I enclose
Name
Address

Hockey Boots and Skates

Prepare for Good Times this winter

The season is beginning early and the boys and girls will have lots of fun on the ice, the next three months. We are sole agents in Wolfville for the famous

"Automobile" Skates

Prices, D. \$7.00
Prices C. 6.50
Tubes 6.00
Mens Auto 4.00
Ladies Auto 4.00
Boys Yukon 2.00

MCPHERSONS "LIGHTNING HITCH"
HOCKEY BOOTS TO fit all.

Skates attached free when buying boots and skates.

Waterbury Co., Ltd.
Wolfville
Mens & Boys Wear, Shoes, Rubbers, Trunks.

Lumber

We make the stencils with which the big mills mark their product. We get the contract because ours cost least and are best made.

LONDON RUBBER STAMP CO.
HALIFAX CANADA