

'Where have you been to?'
 'Down to old Joe Martin's; he's teaching me the fiddle, you know.'
 'Going to be a musician, eh?'
 'Well, I don't know so much about that; but, I expect that the musicians mostly don't have such stiff fingers as mine — though I can play enough to amuse myself at least.'
 'Isn't it dreadful hard work?'
 'Twas a job at first, to be sure, but it's a bit easier now.'

'I never could have patience to learn those little black crankumbobs all over the page; they're all alike to my thinking.'
 'Well, of course, it just depends on whether you think it worth the trouble. Music's like most other things—it isn't worth while beginning unless you mean to keep on.'

'Well, I couldn't be bothered. But I say, Fred, just take out your fiddle, and give us a tune.'

'No, thank you, Charlie, not here. This frosty air wouldn't suit my fiddle's health.'
 'Oh, just a minute wouldn't hurt it. Do, now, there's a good chap.'

'No, but if you like—'
 'I say, Phil,' exclaimed Charlie, as Phil came up, 'do get Fred to give us a tune on his old fiddle; he's as careful of it as if it were a baby.'

'I know something better than that; step in here in the "Fox and Geese," said Fred, and give us a tune.'

'No, thank you, Phil.'
 'Why, Phil, you forget that Fred and I are both Band of Hope boys!'

'Well, what of that? You needn't drink anything if you do come in.'

'I've never been inside a public-house in my life.'

'No more had I, till the first time. There must be a first time to everything.'

'Not to that. Look here, Phil, I was just going to say, when you came up, that if Charlie liked to come on home with me I'd play to him there, and so I will to you.'

'No, thanks, I'm going in here. You'd best come, too, Charlie; there's a jolly billiard-table.'

'You come along with me, Charlie.'
 'Come on, Charlie, don't be a soft. There's Tom Horton and Will Davis in there, and a lot more chaps.'

'Don't you go, Charlie; you know those chaps play for money, and you're best outside.'

'I suppose I needn't play for money, if I do go in?'

'Of course, you needn't. Don't be such a milk-sop, Fred.'

'If you can't say no to Phil, now you're outside,' said Charlie, 'do you think you'll find it any easier to say no to all the rest when you're inside?'

'Anyone would think I was a baby! "Can't say no," indeed!'

'Say it, then, and come on.'

'Go on yourself if you're afraid,' sneered Phil, 'but don't frighten Charlie too.'

'I'm not afraid,' said Charlie.

'You are, then! You're afraid to come in!'

'I'm not afraid of anything!'

'I am,' said Fred; 'I'm afraid of doing wrong.'

'Oh, we know why you won't come in,' said Phil. 'Mother wouldn't like it! I wouldn't be tied to my mother's apron-strings!'

'We might go in just for a minute or two, Fred,' said Charlie; 'Phil does laugh at one so.'

'Well, I'd rather make Phil laugh, than make mother cry, so he can say what he's a mind to about apron-strings. Anyhow I'm going home. She's got a rare good fire for me, and a jolly supper; and you'd best come, too, both of you. I'll back mother's cosy room against the "Fox and Geese" parlor, any night. Come on! hooking his arm in Charlie's.'

'Good-night, Phil!'

Phil stood looking after them for a moment, and then turned into the "Fox and Geese."—'Friendly Greetings.'

Premium Acknowledgment.

Dear Editor,—I received my knife Saturday evening, Nov. 25, and was very glad to receive it so promptly. I did not expect it to be such a nice one, and was very much surprised when I opened the parcel. Thanking you for the opportunity to get such a nice premium.

I remain yours respectfully,
 HAROLD LLOYD STEWART.

Dear Sirs,—I received knife in good condition, am very much pleased with it. Please accept thanks for promptness in sending.

Yours truly,
 HOWARD HAMILTON.

Correspondence

Christmas Greeting.

Dear Boys and Girls,—Again the merry bells of Yule-tide ring in the happy holiday season. Again our hearts are full of the joy of giving and receiving those tokens of loving remembrance with which we show our appreciation of one another every year. Again we gather around mother's knee to hear the sweetest tale on earth, the story of our Saviour's birth. Again we gather in church and Sabbath-school in reverent worship and prayer of Him who came to earth as a little child so many years ago.

You have heard the story often. You remember how the little town of Bethlehem was full of visitors that first Christmas eve, then in the inn, or hotel as we would call it, there was no room for the King of Kings. His first resting place was a manger in a lowly cattle shed. To-day the Lord Jesus makes his resting place in the hearts of those who love Him. You will say, there are a great many people who love the Lord Jesus! Yes, but there are a great many more who do not love Him. Is it not sad?

There was no room in the inn. Perhaps you have wondered over that part of the story, and wished that you had been there to offer Him your house. I am sure that you could not rest quietly in your snug little bed to-night if you knew that the Saviour was coming to earth again as a little helpless babe and had nowhere to lay His head. You would be glad to give Him your little white bed, even if you had to sleep on the floor yourself, would you not?

The Lord Jesus comes to earth now not as a little babe who needs a bed, but by His Spirit who seeks a resting place in our hearts. Have you opened your heart to receive Him? If not, will you not ask Him this Christmas to come and make your heart His home and His throne?

I know that a great many of you have opened your hearts to make room for the Lord Jesus, and know something of the joy of His presence. But around you there are schoolmates and friends, perhaps brothers and sisters whose hearts are full of other things, taken up with their own pleasures and difficulties, and when the Lord Jesus knocks at their heart's door, they just say, 'there is no room.'

There was no room in the inn. But if some one had told the landlord that the Lord of the whole earth, the king of Glory, was coming to earth that night, do you not think he would have made an effort to get rid of some of his guests and give the very best room to the King? He did not know that the Lord was coming, nor did he recognize Him when He came. So our friends who are all taken up with their own interests do not really know the Lord Jesus, nor understand what an honor He does them in asking for room in their hearts.

Perhaps if you would tell some one how you made room for the Lord Jesus in your heart, and how glad you are to have Him make His home and His throne there, that one would be glad to open his heart to the Saviour, too. Sometimes people wait for years and years for some friend to speak to them about the Saviour, but the friend is too shy or forgetful or careless, and the opportunity passes and the soul is lost, all for the lack of a loving word from one who

could tell of the joy of having Jesus in your heart.

Will you try to make room for the Lord Jesus in some heart this Christmas-time? He will bless you and be with you, and give you the true joy of Christmas in your own heart.

Your loving friend,
 THE CORRESPONDENCE EDITOR.

Black River Bridge, Ont.
 Dear Editor,—I live in the township of Marysburgh, in Prince Edward County. I can see boats on Lake Ontario. My father is a fruit-grower, and so I have a great deal of fun in the summer, when the berries are ripe. We have taken the 'Northern Messenger' for about thirty years in our family, and could not get along without it.

RALPH G., aged 10.

Hazel Grove, P.E.I.
 Dear Editor,—Never having seen a letter from this place, I thought I would write one to let you know that I like reading your paper. I am ten years of age. I live on a farm, and my father also has a grist and carding mill. My father and one of my brothers are nearly all the time away from home, as our mills are three miles from home. I am in the fourth book. Our school is one mile from home. We are generally taken in a sleigh in the winter. We have thirteen milch cows. I mostly help to milk, and like it, as long as the cows are not too hard to milk. I hope I will see this letter in the Correspondence page soon.

FREDDIE B.

New Richmond, Que.
 Dear Editor,—I live near the beautiful Bay de Chaleurs. I like to go down to the shore and gather stones and shells. Many people from cities come here in the summer. Many vessels come here laden with flour, tea, sugar, coffee, and molasses, and other goods; sent away laden with oats, potatoes, eggs, butter, hay, and other products. The sold in very rich, so that large crops are raised, trains run daily. Now I will tell about home. There are eleven children in all. One of my sisters is in Boston, and one in Montreal. She teaches a Chinese class. My sister sent me a doll that can open and shut its eyes. I can move its arms and legs. My papa is a farmer, he goes to the woods in winter. I have joined the Loyal Temperance Legion. My mamma belongs to the W. C. T. U.

ROSIE H. M., aged 11.

Halfway River, N.S.
 Dear Editor,—We had a terrible storm here a while ago. We went to school that day and got a ride home. The school-house is about a quarter of a mile from our house. We like our teacher very much. Her name is Miss Fulton, she is full of fun. She lent me her skates and she and I went out skating one day after school.

MINNIE F., aged 11.

Harrow, Ont.
 Dear Editor,—I have a brother a little older than I am; we have fine times playing at marbles and ball. We have a bush on our farm. We gather lots of nuts in the fall. We get your 'Messenger' every Sunday, and like it very much. I think it is the nicest paper we have.

THOMAS R. R., aged 10.

Carbonear, Nfld.
 Dear Editor,—I have seven brothers, and papa takes the 'Messenger' for us to read. We have had a very frosty winter. I go to grandma's nearly every day, and play with my cousin.

WILHELMINA, aged 9.

Time flies.
 Procrastination is the thief of time.
 Don't put off till to-morrow, what you can do for the 'Messenger' to-day.

The early canvasser gets the willing subscriber.

Good intentions are only worth what they accomplish.

If you intend to get subscribers for the 'Messenger' and premiums for yourself, please do—and do it at once.