

## HEAVENLY WISDOM.

BY REV. P. D. MUIR, A.B., MONTREAL, C.E.

“Wisdom is the principal thing.”—PROV. IV. 7.

When you are reading this, dear children, the new year will have just begun. The beginning of a year is very suitable for serious thoughts, for who knows what will be before the end of it. The new year is a time for good wishes. “A happy new year” is a wish often expressed.—The following address is meant to show you how this and every year may be “happy.” If you wish to be happy wisdom is the principal thing.

Once upon a time a number of men were standing in a row. They were prisoners, rebels who had fought against the government to which they belonged. And now they were standing there to hear their sentence read. It was this. Every tenth man was to be pardoned, and the rest were to be hanged. And so they at once began to draw lots who it should be. This was the way the lots were drawn. Tickets with numbers printed on them were put into a box and shaken together. Then each drew one and whoever drew the numbers 10, 20, 30, or any number ending with a 0, was to be pardoned. Now think how anxiously the poor men would draw their tickets, and how eagerly they would look to see if the 0 was there. That 0 was the principal thing. Their lives depended on it. If it was there they might go home and be happy with their friends. But if not, they go to a dark dungeon, and wait in chains till a scaffold was prepared, and then come out and suffer a painful death. Now this is precisely your position, dear children. You are drawing lots which must determine whether you are to be permitted to have a happy life, or whether you are to

be cut off from all happiness and reserved in chains for the judgment of the great day. But there is this difference in your case—that it is not one in ten only that may draw the happy lot, but all may.—Though sometimes one cannot help fearing that perhaps not even so many will. And there is this great difference also, that you have not to draw your lot blindly. You are told beforehand how to choose, and the text which I have chosen is one of the directions given to guide you. Wisdom is the principal thing. Wisdom is the Number which determines your life or death.

Now the Bible is Wisdom. It tells you the best things—in the best way—on the best authority. What do you want most to know? Is it not how you may be happy here and hereafter? Now there are many people who will try to tell you how you may be happy here in this world. They do not all agree among themselves, but they are all very sure that their way is right, and even laugh at those who try any other way. But nobody can tell you how you may be happy hereafter, except as the Bible says. Now think for yourselves. You are young, but you can think this out for yourselves if you try. Must not that way which is best to make you happy hereafter be also the best to make you happy here. This is what the Bible says, and do you not see for yourselves that it must be true? Is not this God's world as well as that to which we are going? Is it not the same God that rules this and that, and are not we ourselves the same? The heathen are not so