

Jes' Fore Christmas.

Father calls me William, sister calls me Will.
 Mother calls me Willie—but the fellows call me Bill!
 Mighty glad I ain't a girl ruther be a boy.
 Without them sashes, and curls and things that a worn by Fauntleroy!
 Most all the time the hull year round there ain't no flies on me,
 But Jes' fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!
 Got a clipper-sled, an' when us boys goes out to slide,
 'Long comes the grocery cart an' we all hook a ride!
 But, sometimes, when the grocery man is worried and cross,
 He reaches at me with his whip and larrups up his boss;
 An' then I laff and holler: "Ob, you never teched me!"
 But Jes' fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!
 Gran'ma says she hopes that when I got to be a man,
 I'll be a missioner like her oides' brother Dan,
 As wuz et up by the cannib'ls that lives in Ceylon's Isle,
 Where every prospeck pleases and only man is vile!
 Ole Sport he hangs around, so sullum like and still—
 His eyes they seem a-sayin': "What's er matter, little Bill?"
 The cat she sneaks down off her perch, a-wonderin' what's become
 Uv them two enemies uv hern that use ter make things hum!
 But I am so porrito and stick so earnest-like to biz,
 That mother sez to father: "How improved our Willie is!"
 But father, havin' been a boy hisself, suspicious me,
 When Jes' fore Christmas, I'm as good as I kin be!
 For Christmas, with its lots an' lots uv candles, cakes and toys,
 Wuz made, they say, f'r proper kids, and not f'r naughty boys!
 So wash yer face and bresh yer hair, an' min' yer p's and q's,
 An' don't bust out yer pantaloons, an' don't wear out yer shoes!
 Say yessum to the ladies, an' yessir to the men,
 An' when they's company don't pass yer plate f'r ple again;
 But, thinkin' uv the things you'd like to see upon that tree,
 Jes' fore Christmas be as good as you kin, be!

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF JUDAH.

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 25.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Heb. 1. 1-9. Memory verses, 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke 2. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. The Son of God, v. 1-4.
2. His Great Glory, v. 5-9.

Time.—The time when this epistle was written is uncertain, but probably about A.D. 68.

HOME READINGS.

- M. A Christmas lesson.—Heb. 1. 1-9.
 T. A Saviour given.—Isa. 9. 1-7.
 W. Sent of God.—1 John 4. 9-15.
 Th. Head over all.—Col. 1. 9-19.
 F. The guiding star.—Matt. 2. 1-11.
 S. The angel's message.—Luke 2. 1-14.
 Su. Seeing and rejoicing.—Luke 2. 15-20.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Son of God, v. 1-4.
 What is our Golden Text?
 How had God spoken unto the fathers?
 Through whom did he afterward speak?
 What was the Son appointed to be?
 What had God made through him?
 What is said of Jesus in verse 3?
 To whom is Jesus declared to be superior?
2. His Great Glory, v. 5-9.
 How does the apostle prove this?
 Repeat the texts quoted in verse 3?
 What text concerning the second coming of our Lord is given in verse 6?
 What does God say of the angels?
 What does he say of his Son?
 What does Christ love, and what does he hate?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- How does this lesson teach—
 1. The greatness of the revelation made in Christ?

2. The greatness of the atonement made by Christ?
3. The greatness of the honour given to Christ?

A NINE HUNDRED DOLLAR FLY.

A trial balance is always a worry and an excitement for the book-keeper, but it is not often that such a crisis occurs as in this experience of a California clerk, recorded by the San Francisco Post:

A book-keeper in a San Francisco wholesale house has been spending sleepless nights for three weeks in fruitless efforts to make his books balance. There was an apparent shortage of nine hundred dollars that could not be accounted for. He added up columns and struck balances until he was almost insane.

He had finally worked himself into the frame of mind that usually lands a man in Canada, the insane asylum, or a suicide's grave, when the manager of the house invited his confidence. Then they went over the books together, but the nine-hundred-dollar shortage was still there.

The head of the house was called in, and the work of overhauling accounts commenced again. They had not gone far before they came to an entry of nineteen hundred dollars.

"Why, that should be one thousand dollars!" declared the employer. "How did it happen to be entered nineteen hundred dollars?"

A careful examination showed that a fly had been crushed between the pages of the cash-book, and one of its legs made a tail of the first cipher of the one-thousand-dollar entry, converting it into a nine.

tic century plant. One of these curious trees was brought from Australia and set out in Virginia, Nev., where it has been seen by many persons. When the sun sets the leaves fold up, and the tender twigs coil tightly, like a little pig's tail. If the shoots are handled, the leaves rustle and move uneasily for a time. If this queer plant is moved from one spot to another, it seems angry, and the leaves stand out in all directions, like the quills on a porcupine. A most pungent and sickening odour, said to resemble that given off by rattlesnakes when annoyed, fills the air, and it is only after an hour or so that the leaves fold in the natural way.—The Evangelist.

CHRIST-CHILD LEGEND.

Beasts and birds have a prominent place in Christmas lore.

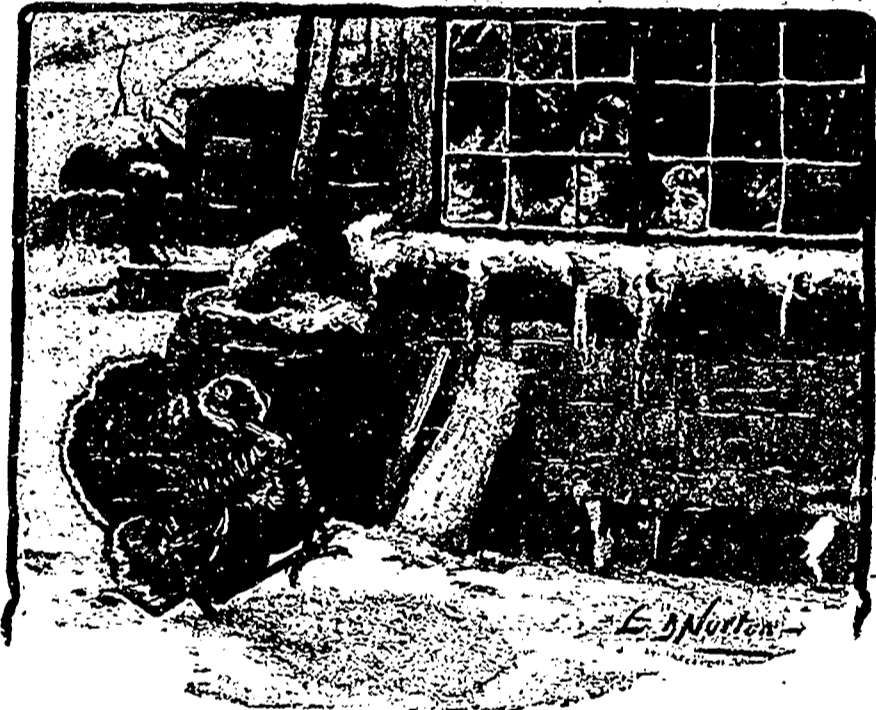
The story of the hunting of the wren in the Isle of Man every Christmas is well known. She is known as Our Lady's hen, God's chicken, Christ's bird, because she was present at Christ's birth, brought moss and feathers to cover the Holy Babe and made a nest in his cradle.

In France the cuckoo was believed to have flown from a Christmas log.

A Latin poem of the Middle Ages tells that the crossbill hatches her eggs at Christmas and her young birds fly off in their full plumage at Easter.

The Mohammedans have many legends of Isa, or Jesus. One tells that when he was seven years old he and his companions made birds and beasts of clay, and Isa proved his superiority by making his fly and walk as he commanded.

In the Tyrol they say the ravens used to have snow white plumage, but one



THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

"Pride goeth before destruction," says the proverb. I am afraid that will be true in the case of Mr. Turkey Gobbler, who struts up and down so proudly in the snow. He seems to want to show off as much as possible before the folk looking out of the window. They are very much interested, I have no doubt. They are thinking rather of how Mr. Turkey will look without his fine feathers than with them. He will not be so proud a bird when he comes nicely browned out of the oven, but he will be fulfilling his duty and destiny in appeasing the hungry appetites of the good folk on Christmas Day.

CURIOUS TREES.

Among the most singular specimens of vegetable life are the bottle trees of Australia. As the name implies, they are bottle shaped, increasing in girth for several feet from the ground, and then tapering toward the top, where they are divided into two or more huge branches, bearing foliage composed of narrow, lance-shaped leaves, from four to seven inches long. The bark is rugged, and the foliage the same in the old and young trees. The bottle tree sometimes grows to a height of six y feet, and measures thirty-five feet around the trunk. Many of these trees are supposed to be thousands of years old.

The angry tree is also a native of Australia. It reaches the height of eighty feet after a rapid growth, and in outward appearance somewhat resembles a gigan-

day Jesus wanted to drink at a stream, and they splashed, and so befouled the water that he could not, so he said, "Ungrateful birds, you are proud of your snow white feathers, but they shall become black and remain so until the judgment day."

A Russian legend tells that horse flesh is considered unclean because when Christ lay in his manger the horse ate the hay from under his bed, but the ox would not, and brought back on his horns to replace what the horse ate.

The Britons believed that the ox and the ass talk together between eleven and twelve o'clock every Christmas Eve.

In Germany the cattle kneel in their stalls at that hour. Another version says they stand up.

The ass and the cow are sacred because they breathed upon the Holy Babe in his stall.

The ass is the most surefooted of animals because he carried the holy family to Egypt by night. He has had a cross on his back ever since.

Old women used to sprinkle holy water on the ass and the cow to drive away disease.

Bees are said to buzz in their hives at the exact hour of our Saviour's birth.

In North Germany the version of the man in the moon is thus told. One Christmas Eve a peasant greatly desired cabbage, but as he had none in his own garden he stole from his neighbour. Just as he filled his basket the Christ-Child rode by on his white horse and said, "Because thou hast stolen on Christmas Eve thou shalt sit in the moon with thy cabbage basket. And there he still sits.—Philadelphia Ledger.

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