

DECEMBER.



IS cold and all is white again,
In wintry dress is field and fen,
Alike the feathery snowflake falls
On cottage and on palace walls:
Once more the poor birds hungering go
In search of food amid the snow,
Once more a time for kindly deed
And generous act to those in need.

The Christmas time has come again,
The time of peace, good-will to men,
When all true hearts desire to bless
The world with love and happiness:
Then with delight goes Golden Hair
And to the poor gives presents rare,
Returning home at verge of night,
She finds the palace all alight.

Ah! Golden Hair, the light you see
Is shining from the Christmas tree,
The fir tree graceful, tall and green,
That was by you in summer seen
Out in the forest, it has come
To you to beautify your home,
And bear the wealth of lovely things
Which to the good the Christ-Child brings,

Oh! ever happy Christmas time,
So bright and blest in every clime;
Oh! day of brightness and of grace,
That pleasure brings to every face;
Sweet period of peace and love,
Reflected from the One above,
'Tis meet with gladsome Christmas cheer
To usher out the dying year.

INCIDENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

WHEN I was on shipboard and a storm was driving us on the rocks the captain cried, "Let go the anchor." But the mate shouted back, "There is a broken link in the cable!" Did the captain say when he heard that, "No matter, it is only a link. The rest of the chain is good. Ninety-nine of a hundred links are strong. Its average is high. It only lacks one per cent. of being perfect. Surely the anchor ought to respect so excellent a chain, and not break away from it?" No, indeed! No, indeed! He shouted, "Get another chain!" He knew that a chain with one broken link was no chain at all; that he might as well throw the anchor overboard without any cable as a defective one. So with the anchor of souls. If there is the least flaw in the cable it is not safe to trust it. We had better throw it away and try to get a new one that we know is perfect.

MR. BARNETT writes from Jaffa: "It is very significant that while from various causes the Jews are beginning to awaken to the fact that their future destiny is bound up with this land, the Turks and Arabs seem to be under a presentiment that their time here is short. I am told by several friends, who have great experience in this country, that some of the natives are very negligent in the cultivation of their fields

and gardens, and the reason they give when asked is, 'What's the use? The Jews will soon have them.'—*Spirit of Missions.*

It has been well said that all the *mathematics* of giving are sadly, radically misleading. The title system may answer for the *minimum*, but never for the maximum of our gifts. It is obvious that \$100 from a man whose income is \$1,000 is a very much larger proportion than is \$1,000 for him who gets \$10,000, or \$10,000 for him who has \$100,000 a year. In one case the man has \$900, in the next \$9,000, and in the last \$90,000 left for his own expenses. The *ethics* of giving reaches higher, but we need some higher plane than either. Shall we call it the *aesthetics* of giving?

THE most successful preachers against Christianity are inconsistent professors. The bad sermons of the life are an overmatch for the best words of the lips. To pray in the sanctuary and to cheat on the exchange; to kneel at the communion table and to oppress the poor; to profess brotherly love and to slander a poor neighbour; to sing of Calvary and heaven and put wrong figures in the ledger, is to bring about the scorn, and not the salvation, of the world, and to brand ourselves as hypocrites, whose false label the Master will indignantly tear off with His own hand at the last day.—*Rev. James Le Huray.*

SPEAKING of the effect of modern discoveries on the assertions of skeptics some one has recently said that the explorations in Nineveh, Babylon and Egypt are exposing not a few of the mistakes and blunders of the doubters and skeptical opposers of revelation. Ingersoll has asserted that the ten commandments never could have been written, as said by Moses, because writing was then unknown, and Renan, in his history of Israel, scouts the idea that writing was commonly known in ancient times, affirming that it was unknown in the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so that the statement as to the signet spoken of in Gen. xxxviii. 18 could not be true. But both Ingersoll and Renan spoke too soon, and only showed their ignorance of early history. For Professor Sayce, coming from a thorough study of Babylonian tablets lately discovered, says that the knowledge and practice of writing was widely spread long before the days of Moses. An eminent French Egyptologist says of Renan's statement, "What a pity he had not withheld his assertion for a few months!" If he had he would have known better. How true it is, as Herschell says, that "all human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly, the truths from on high contained in the sacred Scriptures!"