

DECEMBER.

SOME follows go blowing for Springtime,
And some will hurrah for the Fall;
Some think there's nothing like marbles,
And some that there's nothing like ball;
But if you want regular rackets,
With more fun than ever was guessed,
With coasting and skating and sliding,
And everything just at its best—
The jolly old month of December
Is worth any two of the rest.

For then there is ice on the river,
And then there is snow on the hill,
And the days are so short and so shining
And the nights are so white and so still;
And then at the end there is Christmas,
Of which I've no cause for complaint,
When your stockings get filled by your
mother,
Or some other sort of a saint;
Now if there is anything better,
I'd just like to know—but there ain't.

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HAPPY DAYS.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 8, 1883.

"ONLY LET THEM BE CLEAN."

"ONLY let them be clean," said a lady, when a mother expressed anxiety about getting her children to Sabbath-school. The question of clothes often comes up in such connections, and naturally, for the "take no thought" of the Saviour embodies a counsel that it is difficult to follow. It is also a worthy feeling at bottom which causes a mother to wish that her children, appearing in Sabbath-school and the church, shall look well and feel comfortable along with other children. It is only when it is carried too far that it becomes a difficulty—that it runs into a sin. Many parents do let it influence them unduly, the result being that their children are deprived of advantages that are

open to them, they themselves, also, suffering from a consciousness of being in a false situation. There is much talk about the rich not caring for the poor, and of churches that are kept up as luxuries by the wealthy, and in which plain people are not wanted; but, for the most part, it is a misrepresentation. On the other hand, they who put their money into places of worship do so with the wish that all shall avail themselves of the benefit of it, and have a pleasure in feeling that they can help to supply those who might not be able to do it for themselves. It is right, however, to insist that the line shall be drawn at personal cleanliness, for that is something that is possible with all. It is also one of the means of helping to obtain the moral and religious results which it is the object of the churches to furnish.

DOING THE FATHER'S WILL.

JOSEPHA was not in a very good humour that Sunday, though it was her birthday—her tenth birthday.

In the first place, a Sunday birthday was a dull sort of a thing, she thought; and then baby Fritz had been so sick that mamma had not had a chance to get any little present ready for her. It was true that was only put off—the present was to come—but still Josepha felt out of sorts; and when mamma called her to get her Bible verses she broke out into a regular pout, and grumbled out that it was a hard case she couldn't have any fun at all on her birthday, not even a holiday from Bible verses.

Mamma at once shut the Bible and laid it on the table.

"I can't let you learn your verses while you are in a bad humour, daughter," she said, "so I will preach you a little sermon instead: 'Once there was a little boy who used to beg his father every morning to keep him away from the bees; but instead of helping his father to keep him, he went straight out and played with their hives, and of course they stung him again.'"

"Well, what's next?" asked the little listener.

"That's all," said mamma.

"All? Why, I don't call that a sermon."

"Yes, it's a sermon," answered mamma, "but it is a short one, and it has my daughter for a text."

"Now, mamma, you know I never do anything like that!" exclaimed Josepha.

"I think I can show you that you do something very much like that every morning. When you are repeating the Lord's Prayer what do you say after 'Thy kingdom come?'"

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," repeated the little girl briskly.

"That is, you ask God to make you do his will just as the angels do it. How do you suppose the angels do God's will?"

"I don't know," said the listener, slowly.

"Of course we don't know exactly, but of some things we may feel confident; I am sure they do it promptly; I am sure they do it cheerfully, I am sure they do it perfectly."

"The angels know just what God's will is, but I don't," answered Josepha, who felt as if she needed somehow to defend herself.

Her mother pointed to an illuminated text on the nursery wall: "Children, obey your parents."

There was a long, quiet time then, in which mamma drew her little girl to her knee, and kissed her tenderly.

"I won't give you any verses to get today," she said, gently, "but I'll give you this little sermon to 'learn by heart.' Every time you say, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' remember that you are asking God to make you do what you are told promptly, cheerfully, perfectly. And then you must help the Lord to answer this prayer."

STRETCH IT A LITTLE.

A LITTLE girl and her brother were on their way to the ragged school on a cold winter morning. The roofs of the houses and the grass on the common were white with frost; the wind very sharp. They were both poorly dressed, but the little girl had a sort of coat over her which she seemed to have out-grown.

As they walked briskly along, she drew her little companion up to her, saying:

"Come under my coat, Johnny."

"It isn't big enough for both," he replied.

"Oh, but I can stretch it a little," and they were soon as close together and as warm as two birds in the same nest.

How many shivering bodies and heavy hearts and weeping eyes there are in the world just because people do not stretch their comforts beyond themselves.

KEEP NAUGHTY WORDS OUT.

"I do not want to hear naughty words," said little Charley to one of his school-fellows.

"It does not signify," said the other boy; they go in at one ear and out at the other."

"No," replied Charley, "the worst of it is when naughty words get in, they stick; so I mean to do my best to keep them out."

That is right. Keep them out; for it is sometimes hard work to turn them out, when they once get in.