### OUR HOME CIRCLE.

CHRISTMAS ANGELS.

The Christmas angels, is their mission end-

They are not seen by mortal eye, as when O'er Bethlehem's plain their shining troops descended, And chanted,

The voices that once joined the heavenly chorus, That mighty "Gloria" echoing far and

Are floating in the wintry starlight o'er us, And singing sweetly every Christmas-tide.

For over snow clad hills and moorlands dreary Is heard the rushing of each silver wing ; Wherever homes are sad, or hearts are weary, The blessed Christmas Angels come and

In the dim alleys of the crowded city They enter, where the sunbeams never came, Unbidden guests, yet full of tender pity

For all earth's butter misery and shame.

And then despairing hearts look up and wonder
Whence came that sudden hope they feel

Bidding them rise and break their bonds Those heavy fetters forced by want and

In the vast minster, where the anthems olden In glorious waves of music ebb and flow, Those voices from "Jerusaiem the Golden," Are singing ever with the Church below.

And in the rustic church that rises slowly Amid encircling hills or woodlands dim, The simple song of gratitude is holy, For angels join the poor man's Christmas

Those humble walls can boast no sculptured splendour, Yet is the ballelujah just as sweet; For angels and archangels sing, and render Their feeble notes all perfect and complete.

And we of them their gentle tones may bor row, While this old world is full of grief and

wrong! The word of sympathy in time of sorrow Is pure and precious as an angel's song.

And loving lips which faithfully endeavour To speak their Lord's glad tidings far and

near—
The old, old story that is new for ever— O, these are breathing heaven's own music

### THE BIRTHPLACE OF JE. SUS.

RY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

On the morning of the twentyeighth of last April I mounted my perverse and ill-mannered steed at the Crusader was crowned king, the Pools of Solomon Preparide to on Christmas Day, A. D. 1101.

As we approached that place we struck into well-cultivated fields, and the barley was ripening. Comely women passed us on the bridle-path, some of them wearing a veil like that of Ruth, which is capacious enough to hold "six measures of barley." During the harvest season the farmers sleep in the fields over night, as they did in the days of Boaz. It is said that they still retain the salutations mentioned in the Book of Ruth: "The Lord be with thee!" and "The Lord bless thee!" we rode through several barley fields, later in the day, I noticed a most striking verification of the parable of the sower. The travelled path was so narrow that some handfuls of grain from the sower's hand must have lodged on the beaten track and been trodden under foot of men and beasts. There were several patches of rank and angry thorns, which had thoroughly "choked" out the barley. In the "good ground," which was fertilized by the wash of lime from the adjacent hills. the grain was yielding its twenty or thirty fold. Agriculturally, limestone and water are the salvation of the Palestinian valleys and lower hill-sides. I can easily credit all that the Bible affirms both as to the fertility and teeming population of the Holy Land in those days when reservoirs and cisterns were on every hill-top and terraces lined every declivity.

Bethlehem is the most beautiful and thrifty town in modern Palestine, and it is the one in which the population is almost entirely Christian. Mussulmans are scarce in the little city of David. Not over three hundred are to be found in a population of five thousand. Most of the people belong either to the Latin or the Greek churches. German Protestants have opened a small school with thirty or forty pupils. The Bethdebemites are an industrious folk, with a considerable Yankee skill in the manufacture of various ormaments and "notions" out of olive-wood, mother-of-pearl, and coral. Some of our readers will remember the tasteful articles which they had on sale at the the Philadelphia "Centennial." It is said that they brought back over seventy thousand dollars in solid cash.

The sun was blazing down fiercely as we rode through the narrow streets of Beth-

behem, passing several new and bright-looking buildings, to the Latin Convent. A jolly monk gave us a cordial reception, permitted us to get a good rest on the divans of a long, cool apartment, and set before us a lunch of bread, fruits, honey, and a bottle of natal abstinence.

led us through several passages into the choir of the celebrated Church of the Nativity. We descended a flight of sixteen steps into the crypt, and found ourselves in the chapel, which is forty feet long, sixteen feet wide and ten feet high. The pavement and about 390 A. D. to 420), and here take him to heaven now? he translated God's word into the valuable "Vulgate" version. Among all the saints in the Romish calendar, Jerome is the noblest and the saintliest.

into the nave of the "Church of the Nativity," the oldest Christian structure on the face of the globe. Built by the Emperor Constantine, about the year 330, there is strong evidence, that the nave with its eleven columns of reddish limestone and antique pavement, is a part of the original edifice. The six capitals of the col. umns are Corinthian and on each one is engraved a cross. A whole chapter might be written about this delightfully venerable structure. within whose walls Baldwin

all that foolery of a marble-lined temple. grotto, with its silver lamps, and smoking incense, and monkish tales?" my readers may inquire. Yes. I was disgusted with the overlaid gewgaws and monstrous impostures; but underneath that Church of the Nativity I firmly believe that the infant Jesus was born. I belive that in some portion of that rock was the subterranean stable which witnessed the original Christmas glory. Probably Joseph and Mary lodged at

the khan which stood on the ground once owned by the family of David. Justin Martyr, in the second century, says that Jesus was born in a grotto in Bethlehem. Origen confirms it. The conscientious and careful Jerome sought out the exact spot, and selected his cavern or cell so as to dwell close by the birthplace of his Lord. The tradition is unbroken, and no rival spot has ever been indicated. Bethlehem has not been beseiged, and torn to fragments, and built over again and again like poor Jerusalem; so that the weight of argument is almost overwhelming in favor of the site church, and I felt an assurance that last April I saw the spot on which Christianity broke from Heaven into this dark and sincursed world.

north is David's Well, and beyond are the verdant fields in which the shepherds watched their flocks on that original Christmas night, The hills, the rocks and the valleys are the same that re-echoed the angelic songs when the skies above Bethlehem were filled with celestia, melody. The star hung over those very heights. The glory of the Lord shone on those imestone cliffs which we climbed that April day, and through that atmosphere floated the midnight Christmas song: "Glory to ragged child with tangled golden God in the highest, and on earth curls asleep on the crimson cushpeace among men in whom he is well pleased." No monkish lies or legends can rob the Christian world of its beloved Bethlehem. Independent.

I do remember when I was a child. How my young beart, a stranger then to care. With transport leaped upon this holiday, As o'er the house, all gay with evergroons, From friend to friend with joyful spied I ran,

### " DARLING"— A CHRIST-MAS STORY.

"Go along with you, good for nothin' thing!" The cruel words were accompanied by a savage push, and the cellar door of a dilapidated tenement closed with a "Peace on earth, good will tive wine, which remained uncrash. Up the broken stone steps opened. Dudley Warner says that into the unpitying December the wines in that convent are de- night crept a little boy, shivering cidedly calculated to promote to- and weeping bitterly. He was awhile," she whispered, and pil- who can be influenced by no quite as much as if it was their only six years old, a mere baby, After lunch the courteous monk nearest corner and Aed as fast as his tiny feet would carry him until, almost breathless, and comhouse.

Only a few days ago it was all so different. There was a softwalls are of marble and the apart- voiced lady named "Mamma," ment is lighted by thirty-two who called him "Darling," and lamps. Upon one side of the kissed him. She used to sew all chapel is a recess, and in its pave- day long, and sometimes in the ment is set a silver star, around night he would wake to find her which is the famous inscription: arms about him and his face wet; "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus and one night she told him she Christus natus est." The recess is was going to heaven, a bright, brilliantly lighted with fifteen warm, beautiful place. She lamps. The traditional "man-couldn't take him with her; but ger" was carried away to Rome | if he would be a good boy, Jesus long ago. From this gorgeous would bring him there sometime. subterranean chapel the monk | The next morning she was very conducted us by an underground white and still, and did not anpassage to a grotto, called the swer when he called her name. 'Chapel of St. Jerome." We en- Then the people came and took tered this with genuine venera- him down stairs, and were not tion. Here that grand and de- kind to him, and ever since he vout old scholar spent about thir- had been hungry and cold and ty years of his useful life (from lonesome. Why not ask Jesus to

No passer by heard the sweet lisping tones that said, "Mamma's Dezus, I'se twyin to be dood. I want my mamma. Pease show me where heaven is." But above From the crypt we ascended the Christmas eve jubilee of the great city, up through the azure heights to the throne of Him who was once a babe in Bethlehem of Judea, went that baby prayer.

The sobs ceased. The tiny figure rose and trudged bravely on and on, unnoticed by the crowd that surged through the thoroughfare into which he had turned.

A little way back from the street stood a great ivy-mantled church. There was a faint illumination within which threw out soft tints of crimson and blue upon the newly fallen snow. The vestibule doors stood ajar.

"This is most haven," said the "Were you not disgusted with child, creeping the great

and a solitary light in the organ | how much we miss it," said a darkness into a twilight, through | delinquency of a friend. which the massive grandeur of the sacred place could be felt there will be always more or less warm air and mingling with the fragrance of flowers, seemed to breathe "Peace on earth" through all the shadowy arches.

"Dess Dezus will come the west of the way," softly murmured the child, as over-come by fatigue he entered a high-backed pew and was soon asleep on the velvet cushions.

Miss Deborah Van Zandt sat in great easy chair before a blazing fire, and gazed long and sadly into the glowing depths, which sent a ruddy gleam over her snowy hair, stern, handsome face, and shapely, gem-studded hands.

Christmas eve, and she the only surviving member of her family, encased in her pride of birth and wealth alone in her palatial home, now covered by the ancient unloving and unloved on this the gladdest night of the year! It is no wonder that a feeling of unconquerable loneliness and longing began to melt the frigidity of her nature. She rose and walked From the roof of the convent to the window, and, drawing aside the outlook is glorious. To the the heavy curtains, watched the brilliantly-lighted houses across lies Jerusalem. Away to the east | the way, until a tear fell on her folded hands. For a moment she to be thankful to have come into let it lie there, looking at it with sorrowful interest, for to the stately mistress of the Van Zandt mansion it was rarer than a diamond.

But the carriage stood at the door, and the maid entered the room with Miss Deborah's bonnet and fur cloak. Fifteen minutes later an aristocratic figure entered the Van Zandt pew at St. Matthew's Church, and gave a little well-bred start of surprise to see a These execrable importations ions. Presently a blaze of light wish they were smong those from | Everybody gave something. illuminated the vast sanctuary, a glorious Te Deum resoun led above the worshiping congrega-cion, and Miss Deborah felt a slight touch on her arm, and turned to meet the gaze of a pair of great

but joyous whisper, "Is dis heaven?" "No. child," was the astonish-

"Zen where is it? My mam. ma's there, an' I want her.

Miss Deborah evaded this perplexing query by asking, "What is your name, little boy?

"What else?" "Mamma's darlin.' Will you

" Darlin,"

take me to heaven? "I can't dear; but I'll

vou home with me. Lie still last grand anthem died away into the apostolic benediction.

Two hours after Miss Deborah pletely bewildered, he sank down | sat once more in her luxurious in the shadow of a great ware- home, with an inspiration in her heart and a white robed Christmas gift in her arms.

"Isn't you my uzzer mamma? cooed a tiny voice, as a dimpled cheek nestled against her own. "Yes, darling."

"Zen, I has two mamma's an'-

Dezus.' The last word came very faintly, and Miss Deborah, as the sweet eyes closed, tucked the treasure into a snowy couch, and turned away, feeling that she had looked into the face of the Christ-child.

#### CHRISTMAS IN HEAVEN. BY MRS. LATTIMORE.

Waiting in your shadow'd chamber. Weak with weeping, pale with pain, Longing for the dainty footsteps, Ne'er to cross your floor again,-Let your poor heart take some comfort, Friend of mine, so sad, and sweet, In the thought that earthly aching Ne'er can reach those little feet

How the winter winds are busy. Piling snow drifts high, and higher Entering through the broken windows, Hovels where there is no fire ! Little children, cold and hungry, Vainly seek some sheltering arm; But the one you love so dearly, Evermore is safe from harm.

You had thought to make her Christmas Glad, with innocent surprise, But your gift its charms unfolded To the glance of other eyes; For the Saviour, far more loving, From his white throne bending down, Lifted up your spotless darling To her bright, immortal crown.

Now she roams the flowery meadow, Wanders by the living stream, Revels in eternal ocauties, Far beyond a mortal's dream ; Storms of winter cannot chill her In that sunny summer clime, And with Christ, the Christinas-maker, She has Christmas all the time. -From "Christmas Chimes."

## "BE YE COURTEOUS."

"' 'Thank you,' is a little thing It was not the hour of service, | to say, and yet, it it isn't said, loft served only to dissolve the lovely lady in apologizing for the

Labor with what skill we may.

rather than seen. Strains of soft friction in society. There are delicious music, floating on the queer people, ill-bred people, crosstempered people, round whose corners we, by instinct walk warily, but it is astonishing to observe how many, from whom we expect better things, are neglectful of the little courtesies of life. We have heard of a barbarous South American tribe who have no word in their language for the expression of gratitude, "This will suit me very well," being the nearest approach to it. Some who would be shocked at the charge must be, we conclude, blood relations of this tribe. Our Oriental neighbors carry ceremony to a greater extent than we, but we might with credit to ourselves borrow some of their observances. It is for instance.considered very discourteous to send a verbal message, especially by a servant. If ever so short, it must be written.

Back of all social rules, which may at first seem arbitrary, are reasons relating to comfort and harmony of life which have caused this adoption. It is easier and pleasanter to accept the current practices of society, feeling sure that if we then err it will be on the safe side. Indeed, we ought a world where things were planned out for us instead of being obliged to stumble along in our blind way or to make rules for ourselves.

Few, perhaps, who receive a favor directly refuse the meed of near to it in their graceless way of expressing it, in "Thanks," "No, thanks," "Yes, thanks." good deal more common than we blessed to give than to receive."

whom we expect better things. lustrous blue eyes and an awed

plied gracefully, "Thank you ty of warm little socks and hoods very much." We felt at once, and jackets, good story and piehas it, is a "loaf-giver," one who is gracious, kindly.

preciative people. This is a very too, probably, as fathers and molowed the sunny head on her higher would do well for them- own. and, filled with terror, turned the costly velvet and furs until the selves to give a little attention to The children, too, who took a this. Courtesy is the oil that part in this "more blessed" serwe must carry. Let us try to you can put but one quart of lighten them as much as we may by observing the gentle amenito the most obtuse.

Fine manners are charming and all the things in it, would only as the expression of a love- pout and say, "I wish I had the spirit, but altogether hateful as moon." the cloak of an ignoble one.—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

### THE TEACHER'S DANGER.

Whoever would teach must learn -and this means he must continue to learn; he must learn all the time. The teacher's danger lies in his pausing after he is certified to be competent to teach. Too often, with but a slim stock of knowledge on hand, finding himself surrounded with those who know so little in comparison with what he does, he sits down contented; he employs the same material year after year; as it is new to every successive class, he cannot understand why he should do any more study.

But men get in proportion to what they give. He is giving little, and the result will be that sooner or later it will be found out. The people feel it in their homes, and dissatisfaction is expressed. He concludes to seek another place or another occupation: but to face the foe of his school and his own foe he declines. He teaches as he did last year at his last place, and all goes smoothly for a while, and but for a while. The only thing for the teacher to do is to resolve that he will be what the great Thomas Arnold

called a "running spring." He demanded the possession of fresh of our Sunday-schools follow the to do. He ever, her knowledge as a qualification for pretty home idea of the Father- interest in the cause teaching. And every child and every parent demand the same thing ; they are right. Let the teachers then observe, listen, read, and think: "still achieving, still pur-Such and such only can suing."

# teach.

OUR YOUNG POLKS. "THE BABY'S STOCKING."

Hang up the baby's stocking. Be sure you don't forget. The dearest little darling, She never saw Christmas yet, 've told her all about it. She opened her blue eyes, 'w sure she understood me, She looked so very wise,

Dear! what a tiny stocking, It don't take much to hold Such wee pink toes as baby's, Away from frost and cold; It will not do at all, For Santa won't be looking For anything so small.

This we can do for baby, It is the very plan;
I'll borrow grandma's stocking, The longest that I can, And hang it in the corner, Right here by mine, just so; And pin it in the toe.

Write, "That's the baby's stocking, Hangs in the corner here; You have not seen her, Santa, She only came this year; She's just the sweetest baby, And now before you go, Her stockings crowd with goodies,

From top, clear down to toe.

## THE " MORE BLESSED" CHRISTMAS.

They had a lovely Christmas time in a Sunday-school up in Michigan this winter, and I wish every school in the land could have one like it every year. Inthanks, though many come very | deed, many other schools are trying the plan, and they say it works well. This school called it the 'more blessed' Christmas service." I presume the name from the flippant French are a came from that text, " It is more

The visitors who were admitted We were especially impressed gave in a parcel at the door as the other day in observing a their "ticket," and such a mounyoung lady who thus acknow- tain as it all made, heaped up edged the favors extended at the about the pulpit. I think the table, and how much one, other- Lord was pleased with such a wise well meaning and pleasing, Christmas celebration, for all the lost by the flippancy of manner, presents were for his needy, suffering ones. There were pretty when another lady whose hand- toys of all kinds to make happy Founder kerchief was handed to her, rethe hearts of little children, plen- Dickens.

"That's a woman worth sacrific- ture books, warm clothing of all ing something for, but the other sorts, handy tools and many oth--oh!" A lady, as the old Saxon er things both useful and pretty. Over four hundre | presents were brought in, and I presume they Upon none are favors in life made as many hearts happy when heaped so bountifully as upon ap- they were given out, and more. low motive of conduct, but those there share in their children's joy

makes the machinery of life move vice were about as happy as you easily. There are burdens enough ever see little folks. You know syrup in a quart cup, and one pint in a pint cup. Just so peoties and kindly courtesies of life. ple have capacities for happiness. Not that we would put on affect You may pile on the means of tation of kindness. This indeed happiness, and it will only overwould be altogether vain, for flow; it will not add anything to the mask is transparent, even the amount. Some people, if they had the whole world given them,

The "more blessed" kind of happiness comes nearer filling up the measure than any other I know. But to fully convince yourself, you have only to make the experiment. I would not wait until Christmas, either. Kind, generous deeds are always in season. "The poor you have always with you."

## CHRISTMAS TREES.

Merry Christmas! Why do we keep it with so much joy and gladness? Is there a little child anywhere who does not know that it is the day when our dear Lord was born? "Christ the Prince of glory slept on Mary's knee." The took place. Thus whole beautiful story is familiar groom been summ to every one of us, and the sweetest thing about Christmas is that it belongs to every one of us, to the poorest as well as the richest. for the infant Jesus came to save induced by too m

the whole world. The custom of hanging gifts on Christmas-trees comes to us from Germany. There, for days be at the Head of t forehand, great preparations are death was witnessed made, and when the eve of Christ- residence by a crow mas arrives, the tree is lighted with tapers, and its boughs are find access into the loaded with presents for parents, it is believed, expe children, teachers, friends and land to a wider conclusion, and have Christmas-trees in the Sunin the Sunday-a sphere of his labors of the Sons of Temp day-school. - The Child's World.

### A GOOD CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

Among the novelties in the way of Christmas gifts for the coming season intended for father, mother, brother, or sister, is a suitable holiday envelope, containing a pledge or Christmas promise something like this:

By the help of God, and with my best and truest love. To-: I hereby promise never to use tobacco or ardent spirits before I

am twenty-one years of age. To this is signed the name of the donor.

Boys, all the money you could earn in a year would not purchase a present which would give your parents or your sisters so much pleasure as would such a Christmas pledge signed by you. If the pledges are not for sale in less, but of very dand a self-sacrific your town manufacture one. Purchase a pretty Christmas card and write on the back of it a by bringing the thu pledge similar to the one given here, substituting for the words, " before I am twenty-one years of age," the better promise, "so long as I live."

# CHRISTMAS AT SEA.

They stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the lookout in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every mar among them hummed & Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some by-gone Christmas-day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for one another on that day than on any other day in the year, and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember put through the adhim.

It is good to be chrilden sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself.-

### MEMORIA

MRS. MARY Mary Ann May

loved wife of J. this life in the fa gospel, at Fore 24th., 1882, in ti age. She wis an tian, beloved by Methodist of th Her father, seate father's shoulder John Wesley lay of the first Meth in Hull, Yorksbir ceived her first t Benson, M.s. D tick ton trial She retained her of her choice uni left behind her an band, four child circle of friends. Christ. Her end was in becasual to rest; "out after ing she passed in her Land: Atten obtained her wise once to work and

Elvin, Albert C. Methodist Recorder

WELDON . We have again be through deep wit ten months ago m Joshua D. Tuste. ness pass dawiy t ing only one saw first wife. That s called to join the la ed, too, just as he ceive by process of the paternal estate rangements had marriage, which v one week after bi bride just before th solemnized, and the hopes and prospect the ground. His de ly sudden, after a we violent cold. His last Thursday. H the grave by perhap cession that ever at tives and friends w verting grace of Go but did not follow

I am sorry to infe that Bro. England stricken in the deat oldest child-a love six years. We com remains to the grav Craig just a riving funeral. Our broth en partner will ba sympathy and pray

ceeding his father

ship of the Church;

ored him by attendand walking before

galia.

Wallace Bay, Dec

en and numerous

MINNIE RA Born January 6, 18 ber 24th, 1882. ong enough to mak be life that never days she was thoug was ever ready to d

ed, and often prec

very large attendan proved that she was In April, 1881, th gaged in special seri er Cape, Bayfield arge number of you essed to find salvat sus. Among them he 9th of Apri, w on with her at he eace. No one co bout the great c oon revealed by it oy that the great bat ber sine were was saved. This one but "His that night in the nade " profession nd soon began to bout the great cha sekers to her Lord. Of this delightful

ost the assurance. ummer she left b here she fought be piritual battle. altogether cong , she was in dans aviour through fea al guide she conq lurch, and to eetings and Sa

Jesus. But she was to ret le. Leaving Mon ngs for home, she, o see her friends, co hich soon develor

etter from Bro.

hat she continued