

## The Book of the Year.

Of all the beautiful fancies  
That cluster about the year,  
Tiptoeing over the threshold  
When its earliest dawn is here,  
The best is the simple legend  
Of a book for you and me,  
So fair that our guardian angels  
Desire its lines to see.  
Is full of the brightest pictures,  
Of dream, and story, and rhyme,  
And the whole wide world together  
Turns only a page at a time.  
Some of the leaves are dazzling  
With the feather-flakes of the snow;  
Some of them thrill to the music  
Of the morriest winds that blow;  
Some of them keep the secrets  
That make the roses sweet;  
Some of them sway and rustle  
With the golden heads of wheat.  
I cannot begin to tell you  
Of the lovely things to be,  
In the wonderful year-book waiting,  
A gift for you and me.  
And a thought most strange and solemn,  
Is borne upon my mind—  
On every page a column  
For ourselves we'll surely find.  
Write what we may upon it,  
The record there will stay  
Till the books of time are opened  
In the court of the Judgment Day.  
And should we not be careful  
Lest the words our fingers write  
Shall rise to shame our faces  
When we stand in the dear Lord's sight?  
And should we not remember  
To dread no thought of blame,  
If we sign each page that we finish  
With faith in the dear Lord's name?  
—Mrs. M. E. Sangster.

## New-Year's Tangles.

SOPHIE sat all day and sewed until her cheeks were very pink. It was the day before New Year's, and she felt that her new blue suit must be finished. She was sewing on buttons, and there were so many of them, and they were so small and so slippery that it really took much time and patience. But Sophie gave patience and perseverance, and at last the dress was done. With a happy heart she hung it away in the clothes-press. To-morrow she was to wear it. Helena, the married sister, who lived in the new handsome house on the corner, was going to receive calls all day in her lovely parlours that were just settled, and Sophie had been invited to spend the day and help wait on the guests, and enjoy all there was to enjoy. There was nothing that Sophie liked better than to be dressed up, and play grown-up young lady in her sister's beautiful home.

Alas for her plans! There was another married sister, living three miles away, and on that last night of the old year her baby grew sick, and in the grey dawn of the morning a sleigh stood at the door, and Sophie's mamma came, with cloak and bonnet on, to speak a last word to Sophie.

"I must go, dear, of course. Baby may not be very sick, but Alice is sadly frightened, and wants mother.

And, Sophie, you must stay at home, of course, with little Fannie to-day. It will not do to leave her with Jane. She is too now a girl; I am not sure that I could trust her; and Fannie must not go out, you know. Good-bye, dear. Kiss Fannie for me when she wakes. I'll come back to-night, if possible."

And the sleigh drove away, carrying all the brightness out of Sophie's life with it. Had mamma forgotten the new suit that she worked so hard to finish, and the New Year's calls in Helena's lovely parlours? And here she must stay cooped up all day, playing with Fannie. New Year's day! and her birthday too! Do you wonder that she cried? You don't know what suddenly stopped the tears and made the little woman hop out of bed and dress herself rapidly. I do. It was one of her Christmas presents, and hung at the foot of the bed—an illuminated motto, done in her favourite colours, blue and gold: "Even Christ pleased not himself." She had promised to try to live by it. It would never do to desert it on New Year's morning.

I might write a book about the trials of that day. Fannie was just getting over the measles, and was not perfectly angelic, I assure you. She needed amusing the whole time. She needed watching all through breakfast-time. She wanted her milk in a certain goblet that was not on the table, and she wanted a certain spoon that was not to be found; and she did not want her toast wet, nor her eggs soft. Poor baby! she wanted her mamma. It seemed to Sophie that her papa took less notice than usual, but left Fannie wholly to her care. Patiently she tried to steer the cross baby through the trials of breakfast and prayers. Patiently she humoured her whims, even keeping her still and happy after dinner, while papa sat in the room and wrote letters. A string, that could be woven by skilful fingers into all the queer cat's-cradle shapes, was the thing that amused her then. But one unlucky moment it tangled itself in a dozen knots, and Fannie's temper was not proof against them. She squealed dismally because Sophie could not instantly pick them out; but Sophie tried picking, and petting, and beginning a funny little story, in a whisper, while she worked. Certainly Sophie did not try to please herself during all that trying day. It closed at last; and Fannie, tired out but happy, was put to bed and sung to sleep, and Sophie came down to the sitting-room to rest. Mamma had returned, and was resting in the easy-chair.

"Alice's baby wasn't much sick," she was saying, as Sophie came in. "She has a cold, and was pretty hoarse in the night, and you know how easily young mothers are frightened. I've taken care of baby all day, and let Alice rest. They will do nicely to-night, I think."

Surely Sophie was glad that Alice's baby was better, but it made her weary day seem so unnecessary. What a trial it had been to give up Helena! But nobody seemed to notice it. This was her birthday, and she had not had a single present from anybody. True, she had not expected it; she had always preferred to receive them with the family on Christmas. But then papa and mamma nearly always took some notice of the day, and gave her a book, or a little picture, or something to remember it by. This day had passed without notice; and Fannie had been so cross, and she was so tired, and it was all so unnecessary. She wondered if Helena had missed her.

"Did you call at Helena's?" mamma asked just then, as if she could see the thoughts in Sophie's heart.

"Yes," papa said. He stopped a moment. "Helena had callers; the house had been full all day; she had missed Sophie sadly." Then he turned to that sad-faced young woman sitting in a dull heap in the corner. "Are you too tired, daughter, to go over to Helena's this evening? She said I was to bring you over at eight o'clock to celebrate your birthday. So put yourself in that blue dress, for I suspect there will be other company. But first, my dear, can you untangle this knot for me? I saw you were patient about such work this afternoon."

He handed her a little white paper package—a small square box. The string was tied several times in knots, but fortunately they were bow-knots, and Sophie's fingers soon undid them. The cover was lifted off. Pinned, with a card on it that said, "For a little girl who cheerfully pleased not herself all day." Could the cotton speak? Or what soft, low voice was that whispering under it? "Tick, tock, tick, tock!" That was what it said. But the way in which it fitted into the new watch-pocket of the blue dress that Sophie did not know was there, and how she appeared in the new suit at the birthday surprise party, I shall leave you to guess.—*The Pansy*.

THE dealers in ardent spirits may be compared to men who should advertise for sale consumptions, fevers, rheumatism, palsies, and apoplexies. Would our public authorities permit such a traffic? No; the public voice would be heard at once demanding the punishment of such enemies of our race; and the rulers that would not take speedy vengeance would be executed and removed. But now the men who deal out this slow poison are licensed by law, and they talk about their constitutional rights, and plead their lawful callings. These traffickers in the blood of men tell us that this work of death is their living—their means of supporting their families. But where lies the difference in criminality between the dramseller who for gain administers slow but certain death, and public murderers? The former is licensed in his wickedness by law, the latter must be hanged.—*Dr. Lyman Beecher*.

## LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER, 1888.

A. D. 20] LESSON II. [JAN. 8.

THE MULTITUDE FED.

Matt. 14. 13-21. Memory verses, 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. John 6. 35.

TIME.—29 A. D., following last lesson.

PLACE.—Near Bethsaida, at the north-east of the Sea of Galilee.

RULES.—Same as in the last lesson.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Just after this news of the death of their Master's friend and forerunner had reached him, the disciples returned from their ministry attended by great multitudes, many of whom were on their way to Jerusalem to the passover, which was near. Jesus was compelled for retirement and peace to go into a desert place apart, and here, thronged by the multitudes, he wrought the miracle of this lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Departed thence*—From Capernaum. *Went forth*—From his seclusion on the east side of the sea. *Evening*—The Jews had two evenings: one began at three of the afternoon and lasted till six o'clock; this is the evening here meant. The second evening commenced at six o'clock, and is the one meant in verse 23. *The time is now past*—Two or three interpretations are given. It seems most natural to suppose it means the hour is past for the evening meal. *Five loaves*—Thin bread-cakes, baked after the Jewish manner in the shape of a plate. *Blessed and brake*—This was a custom common for the head of the family among the Jews. *Baskets*—Traveling-baskets, or such as were carried by the people upon their journeys.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- The Master.*  
What caused Jesus to go into a desert place apart?  
How did he go?  
Who followed him?  
How did the people go?  
How was Jesus affected when he saw the multitude?  
Why was he moved with compassion?  
Mark 6. 34.  
What did he do for their sick?
- The Miracle.*  
At evening what request did the disciples make?  
Why did they wish the people sent away?  
What did Jesus command the disciples to do?  
How much food had the disciples?  
What were they told to do with the loaves and fishes?  
What command was given to the people?  
What did Jesus do with the food?  
What did the disciples do with it?  
What portion of the people ate, and with what result?  
What shows that each had enough?  
How much remained after all had eaten?  
How many people were there?  
Of what better bread does the Golden Text tell.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where are we taught in this lesson—
- That Jesus has sympathy with human need?
  - That he has power to supply our daily need?
  - That it is our duty to help the needy as far as we can?

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- Find in the other Gospels five particulars about this miracle which are not named by Matthew.  
Find another instance of feeding the multitude, and compare the two miracles.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

- What made Jesus leave Capernaum and go over the sea? Sorrow for John's death.
- What made Jesus leave his retirement and come forth to the people? Compassion for the perishing people.
- What did they seem like to him? "Like sheep having no shepherd."
- Of what was his miracle a symbol? Of his spiritual relation to men.
- In what words did he express that relation? "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life."