

BUDS AND BLOSSOMS,

AND

Friendly Greetings.


"Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the world with fruit."

Vol. VIII.—No. 12.

DECEMBER, 1884.

Whole No. 33.

Christmas and Friendly Greetings.

HRISTMAS time is coming with all its glad reminders of a Saviour's love and good will to men. Who can be sad at Christmas time? The very name is suggestive of joyfulness. Charity and fellowship join hand in hand, and the miser's grip is a little loosened, for then, if ever, he feels the generous impulses of a better nature, strongly striving to rouse him to the nobleness of true manhood, and to exercise a little indulgence in the luxury of giving. At Christmas time, by some strange mysterious moving of men's hearts, the tide of true generosity seems to rise higher than usual. Its fullness overflows the boundary line of pure selfishness, giving to the giver, and giving for the gift. Even the very poor as a rule for a day at least can forget cleanness of teeth, Amos 4, 6, and want of bread, and have a hint of plenty. To the Christian world Christmas is the centre time of rejoicing. At earth's extremes, in the frozen north and sunny south; men, women, and children, joyfully bid one another, "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." It is a time of hopefulness. The glad notes from Bethlehem's plains still echo through the centuries. The angel's song seems to rise above the clang and clash of earth's perplexing cares and troubles, "Glory to God in the highest! on earth peace; good-will among men." And why this universal gladness and rejoicing? A child was born—Jesus—the pledge that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son—to be Prince of Peace and Saviour. Let Christmas be to us a feast of gladness, a time of hopefulness and love. To be selfish in such a season, and to have no thought how others fare, would prove that our spiritual recollection is warped and stunted by sin. Christmas—glad—happy—Christmas. How it reminds us of a Saviour's large-hearted love. It tells of the "Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

God Bless You All, and give You a High-Tide of XMAS CHEER.

Whilst the flag of our country waves over a traffic so fatal and demoralising in its effects shall we be men if we stand idle, when active temperance work and agitation would remove the strong and protecting arm of the law from men licensed to sell AILS, WILLES AND BIEES, spelled and disguised in winsome ways?

Our Buds and Blossoms. Past and Future.

The quick flight of months calls upon us to announce the completion of another volume of "Buds and Blossoms." Its steady progress that continues to please old friends, and to make new ones, is a source of gratification and thankfulness to us. Evidencing that the eight years of labour in the garden of the Lord, has not been in vain, already we are reaping a reward in the results attained. If measured by the S and c. rule some may say, "what the profit, where the fruit?" Our reply is, we labour for eternity, and believe in due time we shall reap if we faint not. In Christian toil, wages are guaranteed, and the dividend assured, by the husbandman, whose love and power are unlimited. In commencing this *eighth volume* some faith was exercised in largely increasing the issue. More free copies have been scattered than any previous year's full issue. For the *ninth* we have planned continued growth. The many kind testimonials received, make us feel this labour cannot be in vain in the Lord, and is destined to produce fruit to the glory of God. We now ask every interested reader to take a share in the responsibility of increasing the measure of success attained.

To this end we ask your prayers, and earnest endeavour to enlarge our paying list of subscribers. You can do this by lending a copy and speaking a kind word to some friend. If you can obtain an advertisement suitable for our pages in time for January's issue it will be esteemed a favour. We thank all who have in any way aided in the past. It is only by gratuitous labour we have been enabled to pay our bills. Our expense for binding next year, will cost as much as all our outlay the first year we published "Buds and Blossoms," yet the past year has been by far the happiest and most encouraging in the work. Let us hear from you as early as possible; the replies and lists received will help and guide us in making our next contracts.

We will pay liberally for canvassers and give a discount to any one who will take a number for free distribution. We have suggested ways and means of helping. Results are with God in whom we trust, and for whose glory we desire to see much fruit as the result of our labour.

Up to Sept. 25th there has been 10,203 cases of cholera in Naples and 5,385 deaths, a little over one-half having proved fatal, which is an unusually large percentage. It is further said that of the victims more than three-quarters were of intemperate habits.