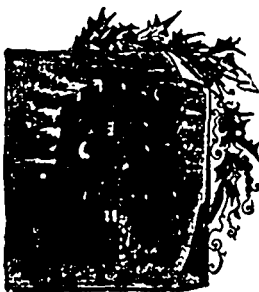


CHRISTMAS CHIMES.



THOSE Christmas bells so sweetly chime,
As on the day when first they rung,
So merrily in the olden time,
And far and wide their music flung:
Shaking the tall grey ivied tower,
With all their deep melodious power:
They still proclaim to every ear,
Old Christmas comes but once a year.

Then he came singing through the woods,
And plucked the holly bright and green;
Pulled here and there the ivy buds;
Was sometimes hidden, sometimes seen—
Half buried 'neath the mistletoe,
His long beard hung with flakes of snow;
And still he ever carolled clear,
Old Christmas comes but once a year.

The hall was then with holly crowned,
'Twas on the wild deer's antlers placed;
It hemmed the battered armor round,
And every ancient trophy graced.
It decked the boar's head, tusked and grim,
The wassail-bowl wreathed to the brim.
A summer green hung everywhere,
For Christmas came but once a year.

The maiden then in quaint attire,
Loosed from her head the silken hoar,
And danced before the yule log fire—
The crackling monarch of the wood
Helmet and shield flashed back the blaze,
In lines of light, like summer's rays,
While music sounded loud and clear,
For Christmas comes but once a year.

No marvel Christmas lives so long,
He never knew but merry hours,
His nights were spent with mirth and song,
In happy homes and princely bowers,
Was greeted both by serf and lord,
And seated at the festal board,
While every voice cried, "Welcome here,"
Old Christmas comes but once a year.

But what care we for days of old,
The knights whose arms have turned to rust,
Their grim boar's heads and pasties cold,
Their castles crumbled into dust?
Never did sweeter faces go,
Blushing beneath the mistletoe,
Than are to-night assembled here,
For Christmas comes but once a year.

For those old times are dead and gone,
And those who hailed them passed away,
Yet still there lingers many a one
To welcome in old Christmas day.
The poor will many a care forget,
The debtor think not of his debt;
But as they each enjoy their cheer,
Wish it was Christmas all the year.

In 1843 there were only six Christian converts in the vast empire of China. Now there are 30,000 communicants, 125,000 adherents, 300 organized churches, 600 stations, 140 ordained and 1,300 unordained native evangelists and teachers.

OUR PARISHES AND CHURCHES.

No. 40—ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES
DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

SOME time prior to the year 1870, a number of the members of the Church of England separated themselves from St. George's, then the parish church, and for several months met in a small building, then used as a school house on the Western Hill. Here services were occasionally conducted by the Rev. Henry Holland, then rector of St. George's Church, and his assistants, up to the year 1872, when Christ Church was completed, and a new parish formed, with the Rev. Wm. Shortt as the incumbent. Christ Church is a frame building of very neat design, about one hundred feet in length, by about thirty feet in width. The interior is finished in dark wood, and the walls and ceiling are models of the decorator's art. In the chancel is placed a large and handsome memorial window, of fine stained glass, to the late Dr. Atkinson, who, for twenty-three years was Rector of St. Catharines. The new Church was formally opened by the Bishop of Toronto on January 1st, 1873. Messrs. T. R. Merritt, Calvin Brown and Hon. James R. Benson were the most active promoters of the new parish. Mr. Shortt continued to fill the incumbency of the new parish until early in June, 1875, when he resigned and removed to Walkerton. He was succeeded on the 1st of January, 1876, by the Rev. Wm. Brookman, under whose ministry the congregations at Christ Church continued to increase so rapidly that it was found necessary to rent the rooms at the corner of St. Paul and Ontario streets, in connection with Christ Church parish. In the opening months of 1877, Mr. Brookman's parishioners, feeling the great inconvenience caused by their want of accommodation, decided to erect a large church on the opposite, or town side, of the canal, and steps were immediately taken towards the building of St. Thomas'.

The corner-stone of the new edifice was laid on the 12th of September, 1877, and St. Thomas' Church was formally opened on November 19th, 1879.

The preliminary address at the laying of the corner-stone was read by the late Dr. Theophilus Mack, who set forth the reasons which led to the separation of the new parish from St. George's Church, and which necessitated the erection of the temple whose corner-stone they had assembled to set in place. The closing words of the doctor's address were particularly eloquent, and are well worthy of repetition. After commenting on the many facts which, despite the financial depression which prevailed, led them to attempt the erection of so costly and imposing an edifice, he said: "We enter upon our task in the hope that we shall, ere long, bring to a satisfactory completion a church wherein we and our descendants for generations to come may pray in the beautiful and